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Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party

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MARXISM TODAY

THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Volume 15 Number 8

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Editorial Comments

THE FORMATION OF A Committee for the Recognition of the German Democratic Republic is more than timely. A letter announcing the formation of this committee and urging such recognition was printed in *The Times* on June 10th.

The signatories included many Labour MP's—amongst them Renee Short, William Wilson, ex-Labour Minister R. H. S. Crossman, now Editor of *The New Statesman,* Liberal MP David Steel, novelist James Aldridge, such prominent figures in law, science and music as D. N. Pritt, Alan Bush and Professor Burhop as well as the Reverend Paul Oestreicher and others.

In their letter they say that the GDR has "come to stay", that the "existence of two German States is now universally accepted," that it is "the ninth most industrially developed nation in the world" and argue that justice, peace and trade expansion alike demand its recognition.

This was followed by a leading article in *The New Statesman* on June 11th entitled "Two Germanies, Two Embassies", which declares that Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* means that he has "... tacitly abandoned the West German claim that the Bonn regime was the only true government of a single German State . . ." and urges the British government to do likewise.

It calls for the establishment of a British Embassy in East Berlin and pending its achievement, the ending of various petty and irritating obstacles which now exist to trade with and travel to the GDR.

The non-recognition of the German Democratic Republic is a ridiculous and reactionary anomaly. All British progressives will welcome this new initiative and give it every support.

Point is given to the need for much closer contact with the GDR by the discussions and decisions of the Eighth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) which took place from June 15th-20th.

Even the bitterest enemies of the GDR cannot now deny the great economic and social advances which it has made. These, along with discussion of weaknesses and plans for the future were all outlined in the major Political Report of the Central Committee given to the Congress by the new First Secretary, Erich Honecker. The Report covered the following main questions—the main tendencies in international development and the foreign policy of the SED; the development of socialist society in the GDR; the Socialist Unity Party as leading force in the socialist society of the GDR.

ADVANCED SOCIALIST SOCIETY

The greetings of the CPSU were brought to the Socialist Unity Party Congress by Leonid Brezhnev. In the course of his remarks he spoke of the stage of socialist society into which a whole number of socialist countries were now advancing.

> "At present a number of socialist countries have entered the stage of development which the Communist Parties of these countries define as the building of mature or developed socialism. There arise before them at this stage vast and extremely complex tasks of how best to combine the advantages of the socialist system with the latest achievements of the scientific and technological revolution: how to ensure on this basis high efficiency and planned proportionate development of the entire national economy and considerable improvement in the people's well-being; in what forms to develop and extend more broadly the work of shaping the consciousness of people in a socialist spirit; by what roads to advance in the creative development of socialist democracy; how to raise to a new level the co-operation of the fraternal socialist countries".

What is involved in this conception of mature or developed socialism? We are printing in this issue of *Marxism Today* a long extract from the Report by Todor Zhivkov to the Tenth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party which deals precisely with this question. And in a forthcoming issue we hope to publish parts of the speech of Erich Honecker to the Eighth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party which deals with the development of socialism in the GDR.

SOVIET GEORGIA—FIFTY YEARS OLD

Just over fifty years ago Menshevik power was overthrown in Georgia and on February 25th, 1921, Sergo Ordzhonikidze telegraphed to Lenin and Stalin:

> "The red flag of Soviet Power is fluttering over Tiflis. Long live Soviet Georgia".

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Pravda of May 15th reports L. I. Brezhnev's speech of greeting to the people of Georgia on this fiftieth anniversary. Brezhnev spoke of the successful building of socialism in Georgia. In these fifty years the country had been totally transformed:

> "Taking guidance from Lenin's teachings, leaning on the fraternal assistance of the Russian Federation and of the other Republics, the working people of Georgia successfully laid the foundations of socialism".

Speaking to a *Pravda* correspondent, V. P. Mzhavanadze, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia, stressed the importance of the aid of the Russian and other peoples of the USSR in bringing about this rapid and radical transformation of Georgia, which makes it stand out in such utter contrast with countries of Asia and the Near East, not so very distant, but still living in conditions of neo-colonialism.

In 1922, on Lenin's initiative, he said, Moscow workers handed over as a gift to the Georgian working people the equipment of a cloth factory, which was assembled in Kutaisi, and laid the foundation for the industrialisation of the Republic. It was precisely this strong force of friendship, he added:

> "that brought into being new industrial and cultural centres of Georgia. It is this friendship of the peoples that built the canal of life in the Samgor Steppes, drained the Colchis swamps, erected huge hydro-electric stations, changed the course of rivers, built the Tiflis metro. . . ."

The technical and economic backwardness has been ended in Georgia, many new branches of industry have been developed—ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, machine tool and instrument making, aviation and automobile, electrical, engineering, coal, chemical, textile, food and timber. More than 1,000 large industrial enterprises have been built in the Republic. The total output of industry has increased to 85 times that of 1913 in fifty years of Soviet power. There now exists a diversified socialist agriculture equipped with modern machines.

A quick glance at the figures of Georgian economic development, of the advance of Georgian science and of education at every level suffice to show the utter contrast between those formerly underdeveloped countries that, like Georgia, have developed within and as part of the Soviet Union and those who have painfully moved from colonialism or semi-colonialism to neo-colonial status.

DEATH OF GYORGY LUKACS

There are not many who, when well on in their eighties, are still making fresh, provoking, creative contributions to Marxism-Leninism.

Lukacs was 86 when he died on June 4th, deeply regretted by us all. In the last years before his death he had published his *Aesthetics* and his work on Lenin. He was striving to complete his *Ontology of Social Being* and drawing up plans for his work on Ethics. His books, from his first to his latest were being translated and studied in socialist and capitalist countries throughout the world.

Lukacs was 33 years old when he became a member of the newly-formed Hungarian Communist Party in December 1918. Jolan Kelen, a foundation member of the Hungarian Party, writes of the misgivings of some of the Party members when Lukacs first made his application for membership. "A mad Hegelian is far from being a Communist", one remarked. Others doubted that he would be ready to undertake the difficult practical work that faced the Party. But almost immediately he was involved in editing a Party journal, and, during the Hungarian Revolution of 1919, became Commissar for Education.

Lukacs was not only a man deeply committed to the theory and practice of Marxism, but became very much a Party man. Differences with the Party he had at times. After 1956 he was outside it for a period, but, in 1968, rejoined.

The breadth of his learning and interest was enormous. His main contributions were in the fields of philosophy, aesthetics and politics. Everything that he wrote provoked and still provokes much thought. One can be deeply in disagreement with Lukacs on one or another question and yet in the course of reading or speaking with him learn very much on the subject being discussed. Indeed he often found himself in disagreement with his fellow Marxists, was attacked certainly sometimes unjustly and probably sometimes correctly. He himself would be the first to acknowledge this. He was never complacent. He could look back self-critically to his past writings and attitudes, and, like most real Marxists, rejected utterly the thought of his own infallibility.

The *Népszabadsag* (People's Freedom), daily journal of the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party, published an obituary on

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June 6th. It spoke of the loss to the international Marxist movement:

> ". . . nobody can fail to be under the influence of his work, not only because of a deeply felt respect for the position he has held for nearly six decades at home and abroad, but also because *his* writings have contributed to the understanding and the solutions of the problems of our age".

"MOTIVATED BY TRUTH, NEVER BY AUTHORITY"

Népszabadsag quoted from an article which Lukacs wrote in *International Literature* in 1933, in which he declared:

> ". . . More than 30 years have passed since as a young boy I read the *Communist Manifesto* for the first time. My progressive absorption in Marx's writings . . . has become the history of my intellectual development and—far beyond this—the history of my whole life. . . In my opinion, in the age which follows the appearance of Marx, the clarification of one's relationship to Marx must become the central problem of every writer who takes himself seriously: the manner in which and the degree to which he acquires the methods and results of Marx define his place in the development of mankind. . ."

The obituary notes that the People's State of Hungary twice awarded to Lukacs the Kossuth prize. Up to the time of his retirement he taught at Budapest University. It continues:

> "Generations of Marxists were raised on his teachings. He influenced numerous contemporary artists and thinkers. His life was spent in struggle, in great ideological strife, and the strength of his intellect was recognised even by his opponents, though they never forgave the consistency with which he defended the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism against bourgeois ideology and illusion. He had, also, disputes within the Communist Movement, to which, nevertheless, right unto the end of his life, he felt that he belonged.".
>
> "He had the strength to view himself critically, and to go beyond one-sidedness and mistakes. He was motivated by truth, never by authority. He considered discussion a natural state, a form of movement in intellectual life".
>
> "In an interview given to *Népszabadsag* in 1967 he formulated his ideas thus: 'As a philosopher I deem it my duty to express my own views resolutely. If they lead to discussion, so much the better' ".

Gyorgy Lukacs, the obituary ended, won:

> "deserved recognition as a Hungarian and as a Communist for his Party, his country, the international working class movement, and for universal Marxist-Leninist theory. There is no doubt that in his works and teachings this great life will be continued, and will continue to shape the present and the future".

South African Communist Party, 1921-1971

Aspects of Party History

By a Member of the Central Commitee of the Communist Party of South Africa

Tracing the antecedents of the Communist Party of South Africa, founded on July 30th, 1921, as a section of the Communist International, we must look in the first place at the *International Socialist League,* established in 1915 by revolutionaries who broke away from the chauvinist, South African Labour Party and fought against the imperialist war.

It is true that pioneers of liberationist, radical and even Marxist ideas existed before that time. Early African organisations of a nationalist trend had existed since 1882, when *Imbumba Yama Africa* (the 'Aborigine's Association') was established in the Eastern Cape. The main political expression of the coloured people, The African People's Organisation established in 1902, expressed radical and socialist ideas.

The discovery of huge deposits of diamonds and gold at the close of the 19th century brought a rush to the country not only of foreign

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capitalists but also of tens of thousands of immigrant workmen, artisans and others, from Britain and elsewhere in Europe. Many brought with them their trade union and socialist ideas and established organisations to further those ideas: often branches of similar British organisations.

In 1910 the four British colonies in the region were combined into the Union of South Africa with wide powers of legislation and self-government transferred to the local white minority. With the backing of various socialist societies which had existed in the various colonies, and especially of the militant Witwatersrand trade unions, the South African Labour Party was formed in 1909.

Foundation of South African Labour Party

Like most Social-Democratic parties of the time the Labour Party was a coming-together of widely-differing tendencies. On its right wing were conservative trade union officials and men ambitious for a parliamentary "career"; on the left, upholders of internationalism and socialist principles.

Influenced by the white chauvinism already widespread in the working class and the country as a whole, the Labour Party adopted an attitude at best ambiguous and sometimes hostile to the demands and aspirations of the oppressed majority. White trade unionists resisted the entry of non-whites to skilled jobs and excluded them from their unions.

In the meantime the Government introduced the Land Act in 1913 which made it illegal for Africans to own or hire land except in the meagre and barren areas set aside as 'reserves'. The African National Congress, established in 1912, campaigned bitterly against this law—without, it must be said, the support or sympathy of the white workers and their Labour Party. African miners on the Witwatersrand struck work in 1913, following the example set by their (infinitely better paid) white fellow workers. The Indian minority in South Africa, led by the great Mahatma Gandhi, who began his political life in our country, embarked on effective campaigns and a general strike, at the same time, against racialist measures of the Smuts-Botha government.

The growing resistance movement of 1913 among the oppressed people had far-reaching effects among a small section of the more class-conscious among the white workers.

The mood was reflected at the 1913 Labour Party conference, which decided, though not without opposition, to admit coloured members and elected an executive far more advanced and principled than its predecessor.

During World War I

As with most of the Parties of the Second International, however, the onset of the First World War brought out within the Labour Party the deep internal conflict between revolutionary, internationalist elements on the one hand and opportunist jingoist elements on the other.

The Botha-Smuts government decided in September 1914 to join Britain and invaded German South West Africa.

The immediate reaction of the Labour Party leadership was to stand by the well-known resolution of the Second International—partly drafted by Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg—which foresaw the war and called on all workers to fight against it. A resolution adopted by the Executive on August 2nd, 1914, denounced the war as unjust and fomented by 'capitalist governments and armament manufacturers' against the interests of the working class. Similar resolutions were passed by the trade unions affiliated to the Industrial Federation, and the Cape and Natal Social-Democratic Movements. The Annual Party Conference in January 1915, returned the internationalist, anti-war group headed by Bill Andrews and Ivor Jones to the leadership of the Party, in the face of a determined effort of the Right wing headed by F. Creswell, a former mine manager and outspoken racialist, which was determined to drag the Party into support for the war.

The internationalists resisted the jingoistic onslaught. In September 1914 S. P. Bunting, Ivor Jones, Colin Wade and others within the Labour Party established the War on War League, with its own journal, *The War on War Gazette*. No bourgeois pacifist body, the League's propaganda was revolutionary and socialist in its content. It was finally strangled by government censorship.

The Internationalists, in the face of intensive censorship and persecution by the Botha-Smuts government, persisted courageously with their policy inside and outside the Party. The Creswellites, advocates of the "see-it-through" policy, by contrast resorted to underhand factional activities and relied on whipping up jingoism.

Finally, in August 1915, the 'see-it-through' imperialist faction succeeded in forcing a special conference, packed by the Creswellites, at which they carried a pro-war resolution.

The Right wing followed up this victory by demanding that all candidates for the coming elections pledge their support for the war: in protest eight executive members headed by the Chairman (Andrews) the Secretary (Jones) and the treasurer (Wainstock) resigned from their positions. A new body of internationalists, incorporating the War on War League, was formed, and

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started its own weekly—*The International*. Within a few weeks it became clear that the Labour Party would not tolerate a revolutionary wing within its ranks.

In September 1915 they therefore quit the Labour Party and established a new organisation: the International Socialist League of South Africa.

The New International

'Here we plant the flag of the New International in South Africa'. Those were the challenging words with which David Ivor Jones began his editorial in the very first issue of *The International*. For he and his comrades did not believe that the desertion of the leaders of the European socialist movement meant the end of that movement; they believed that out of that experience a new and greater movement would arise on sound, revolutionary foundations—the 'New International'. It was the very thought which Lenin had expressed in November 1914 when, unknown to the South Africans, whose knowledge of overseas developments was obscured by heavy censorship, he had written:

> "The Second International is dead, overcome by opportunism. Down with opportunism, and long live the Third International".

"What the labour movement required is a return to the limpid, unequivocal affirmations of the *Communist Manifesto* of Karl Marx", wrote *The International* ("Back to the Manifesto"—December 10th, 1915). It was precisely these two main characteristics of the *International Socialist League*: its devoted internationalism and its determination to break with the opportunism of the Labour Party and return to the "limpid, unequivocal affirmations" of Marxism which were its chief strengths. These were the qualities which enabled it to survive and develop, to overcome all its inner difficulties and external hostility, to provide the main foundation upon which the Communist Party of South Africa was built in 1921.

The first Congress of the ISL, in January 1916, adopted a petition of rights, moved by S. P. Bunting. This document demanded the abolition of pass laws and indentured and compound labour, and equal rights, political and industrial, for African workers.

The League began to turn an ever-increasing proportion of its attention and activities towards the socialist enlightenment of the African and other non-white workers. In contrast with the indifference shown by the Labour Party towards the African majority, the League campaigned in protest against the Native Administration Bill of 1917, designed to complete the process of African proletarianisation. A meeting held in Johannesburg in March that year was an historic occasion, for ANC leaders S. Msane and A. Mbele had accepted the League's invitation to share its platform: an extraordinary event for the times.

The Russian Revolution

The upheavals in Russia in 1917, as in the rest of the world, burst with shattering impact upon the workers and oppressed people of South Africa. The significance of Russia had never been lost upon the South African radicals: many of them refugees from Tsarism because of their Jewish origin or Socialist principles.

The International, and particularly Ivor Jones its editor, responded to the Russian events not only with enthusiasm but also with profound Marxist understanding.

From July 1917 onwards *The International* began to receive and pass on to its readers information from actual Bolshevik sources. The July, 1917, issue reproduced almost in full an article from *Pravda* (described as "Lenin's Organ") and passages from Pravda appeared in nearly every issue thereafter, as well as from *Izvestia*. "Lenin on the Top" was the heading of an editorial (August 31st) declaring "The situation is developing in favour of the principles advocated by Lenin. Every week proves him right".

Hearty greetings for the revolution were expressed at the annual ISL Congress at the beginning of January 1918, and Bill Andrews, then visiting London, was instructed to meet the newly-appointed Soviet representative, Litvinov, to make contact between the League and the Bolsheviks.

The Third International

The International Socialist League enthusiastically welcomed the news of the establishment of the Third International (The Communist International). It was in fact a development of the sort it had advocated since its establishment in 1915. The League was among the first Parties to apply for affiliation and it was represented at the Third World Congress of the Communist International, held in Moscow in 1921 by two delegates: D. I. Jones and Sam Barlin.

In accordance with the stringent stipulations deliberately formulated by the International—vigilant against any revival of opportunism in its ranks, the ISL called a meeting of 100 delegates from nearly all the socialist organisations—excluding the Labour Party, though some of its individual members took part. Meeting in Johannesburg on January 2nd, 1921, nearly all agreed on the Twenty-one Conditions of affiliation to the Comintern.

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Communist Party Founded

By March, 1921, a sufficient measure of unity had been attained to enable a Joint Unity Committee to be elected, to draft a Manifesto and Constitution and prepare for the founding Conference of the Communist Party. This took place in Cape Town, from July 30th to August 1st, 1921.

The Conference formally established the Communist Party of South Africa (South African Section of the Communist International), and adopted its Constitution and Manifesto.

It also elected an executive, with its headquarters in Johannesburg. W. H. Andrews was elected Secretary-Editor, C. B. Tyler Chairman and S. P. Bunting Treasurer. The organ of the new Party was to be *The International*, and it took over the ISL's press and offices.

Clearly, the Communist Party at its outset bore the powerful impress of its main constituent body: the International Socialist League—in its membership, leadership and character. Some commentators have concluded that the Party was "virtually a continuation of the League"; and as late as 1929 the national conference of the Party referred to its "origins in 1915".

The 1921 Conference, however, signified far more than a mere change of name. For the first time it united the revolutionaries of South Africa in a single, disciplined and ideologically united Party of a new type. The Party members distributed and studied the works of Marx, Engels and other leaders of Marxist thought.

The exchange of experiences and ideas among the vanguard workers' parties and theorists of the whole world, to which the South African Communists contributed much and from which they gained a great deal more, was a decisive factor in the development of the Party.

Guided by Marxist Leninist theory and the Communist International, the Communist Party was to develop into the revolutionary vanguard of the oppressed working people and a close partner in the united front of national liberation, centred around the African National Congress.

Early Struggles 1920-1922

From its formation the Communist Party of South Africa was faced with burning and complex problems. A violent onslaught was launched by the imperialistic Smuts Government against all sections of the working people, expressed in bloodshed and massacres.

The early nineteen-twenties were stormy and eventful years for South Africa. The economic crisis that swept through the world after the first world war had not left the country unaffected; nor had the revolutionary upsurge that followed the Russian Revolution of 1917. The African National Congress raised a strong demand for democracy and freedom for the oppressed people, and sent a delegation to place the African case before the Versailles Peace Conference. Non-white dockers at Cape Town, African municipal workers and 80,000 mine workers on the Rand and the workers of Port Elizabeth came out on strike for better pay and conditions. The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU), supported by the ANC and the Communists, had launched out on a spectacular drive to organise African workers in the towns and the countryside.

In the early years it grew rapidly into one of the most powerful labour organisations in Africa, counting its members in tens of thousands, with branches in every area of South Africa and even in countries beyond its borders. The Smuts Government, agent of British imperialism and the dominant mining capitalists of South Africa, struck back at the working people in a series of bloody massacres.

In Port Elizabeth, in October 1920, a mass of demonstrators gathered outside the police station to demand the release of the ICU organiser, Samuel Masabalala, who had been arrested after demanding a minimum wage of ten shillings a day. Police opened fire, killing 23 and wounding 123 workers. At Bulhoek location, near Queenstown, 800 troops marched in to "deal with" an African religious sect (the "Israelites") who had refused to move their camp and demanded to see Smuts. On May 24th, 1921, the Governments troops opened fire. 163 Africans were killed and 129 wounded.

The Bondelswarts, a small tribe of Coloured people of South West Africa, who had fought a bitter struggle against German occupation, demanded freedom and independence from Pretoria in terms of the League of Nations Mandate. The Smuts Government sent bombing planes and troops armed with artillery and machine guns to South West Africa. Men, women and children were killed in air raids on their village of Guruchas on May 29th and 30th, 1922: The Bondelswarts fled into the bush but were hunted down and overpowered by the superior weapons of the Union forces. Apart from those killed in the air raids, the South African authorities announced the casualties of this "campaign" to be 150 Bondelswart men killed in action; government losses, two.

The Witwatersrand was the scene of the most protracted and bloody strike in the history of the white workers movement of South Africa, from January to March, 1922. The employers, united in the Chamber of Mines, attempted to cut their goldmining costs by cutting down the number of highly-paid workers and replacing some of them

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with Africans. The white workers resisted this attempt. This was the basic issue of the strike which began on January 22nd and was only terminated in March after bloody clashes between the workers and Smuts' army.

Military planes were used to bomb working areas; artillery, tanks and armoured cars were brought into action in addition to ground forces employing machine guns and rifles. A Government inquiry reported the casualties at 153 killed (including 72 soldiers and policemen) and 687 injured. Thousands of strikers and their leaders were arrested and four—Long, Hull, Lewis and Stassen—were executed.

The Communist Party executive had, at the outset, issued a manifesto supporting the strike committee, "convinced that essentially this is a fight against the capitalist class". The Party members proved among the most loyal and devoted workers during the strike. Two of them, W. H. Andrews and E. Shaw, served on the Council of Action which played a vital part in the leadership at a time when the official union leaders were ready to surrender without a fight.

But the predominant leaders of the workers were by no means Communists. The union leadership was mainly in the hands of Creswellite "white labour" racialists, who made "White South Africa" one of the main slogans of the strike. Indeed—though once it had pledged support it was given wholeheartedly—the Party had grave misgivings about the issue involved—the maintenance of a privileged position for white workers. The manifesto specifically declared that Party support was given "without necessarily identifying itself with every slogan heard in the strike" and Andrews himself in a personal letter expressed his "private opinion" that the strike would "inevitably be lost". It was "impossible" he declared "for white workers in South Africa permanently to keep the natives out of any form of industry . . ."

Much of the energy of the Party during the strike was expended on appeals to the strikers to remember that their enemy was the capitalist mine owners and the government, not their black fellow-workers. Without such tireless propaganda there can be no doubt that, encouraged by government provocateurs and extreme white racialists, more clashes would have taken place between black and white workers.

The demands that the white workers had failed to achieve through strike action were won at the polls in the 1924 General Election, when the Smuts Government was defeated by a coalition of the Labour Party and the Afrikaner Nationalist Party under General Hertzog. Even more outspokenly racialist than Smuts, the Pact government secured a virtual monopoly of highly-paid, skilled jobs for whites—a monopoly they have retained ever since. It was a Pyrrhic victory. As the Communist Party correctly commented in 1961 ("After Forty Years"):

> "If 1922 was the high water mark of white labour in South Africa, it was also its greatest and *decisive defeat* as a force independent of the bourgeoisie. From 1922 onwards, the pure 'white' labour movement in this country was transformed step by step into an emasculated adjunct of the boss class, exchanging their independence for concessions and privileges, the price of their support for white imperialism in its brutal oppression and exploitation of the African people".

The Communist Party's reaction to the election pact was one of qualified approval: it had small confidence in either Party. *The International* (April 27th, 1923) called it an "alliance between bourgeois nationalism and labour imperialism", but added:

> "Notwithstanding . . . the obvious insincerity of the whole arrangement we recognise that a general assault on the Smuts-Chamber of Mines combination must be made".

The Fall of the ICU

In the meantime "Labour" imperialism expressed through the Amsterdam International and the British TUC abroad, bourgeois liberalism within South Africa—as well as the weakness and egoism of the ICU's secretary, Clements Kadalie, succeeded in weakening and ultimately destroying the ICU.

The Communist Party and its members had contributed immensely to building the organisation, and well Kadalie knew it.

Yet by the end of 1926, Kadalie suddenly forced a split with the Communists, carried a resolution excluding Party members from holding office in the ICU, and veered sharply towards a policy of "sensible, moderate" trade unionism, eschewing the radical political content which had drawn Africans to the organisation in their tens of thousands. The new policy was a dismal failure. Within the next two years the ICU dwindled and split until virtually nothing was left of this mighty body of organised workers. The failure of the "white" labour movement, the increasingly reactionary character of the Pact government, and the initial inspiring achievements of the ICU caused the Communist Party closely to scrutinise its policy and direction of work.

Many members questioned the weight and emphasis which continued to be given to Communist work among the white workers.

A full-scale debate took place at the Third National Conference of the Party at the end of

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1924, on a motion that a fresh approach be made to the Labour Party for affiliation.

Turn in Party Work

Arguing against this proposal, S. P. Bunting, E. R. Roux and others strongly emphasised the need to concentrate on work among the Africans. The Conference implicitly supported this view.

The terms of the final resolution on this subject were not new, but the emphasis was. It was a turn in the direction of Party work reflected also in the election of Bunting as Chairman and Roux as Vice-Chairman of the Party. Though it was long before the Party was to generalise the significance of the break with the past in theoretical terms, it was a real turning-point, and resulted in shifts of leadership.

Following the 1924 Conference the Party turned the main drive increasingly towards the organisation of the African workers, whom the ever-increasing pressures of the white-dominated economy and government were driving in their thousands from the countryside and into the burgeoning secondary industries of the towns. Under the direction of the Central Committee, members experienced in the trade union field directed their attention towards building African trade unions and attracting many militants seeking a new beginning after the collapse of the ICU. Party schools were established in which, under the general direction of the veteran Communist T. W. Thibedi, a drive was launched against illiteracy and educational backwardness inflicted upon Africans by deliberate state policy, as well as an introduction to Marxist theory.

A considerable number of African workers and revolutionary intellectuals came into the Party at this time. Many of these recruits were to play an outstanding role in the future of the liberation movement, the trade union movement and the Party. Among them were Albert Nzula (1906-1933), Moses M. Kotane, J. B. Marks, E. T. Mofutsanyana, Johannes Nkosi, Gana Makabeni, Josie Mpama, and many others.

Relations with African National Congress

At the same time the Party's relationship with the African National Congress improved greatly. J. J. Gumede, Congress President, attended the International Congress of the League Against Imperialism at Brussels, Belgium, in February, 1927, together with James La Guma, representing the Communist Party. President Gumede told this great international gathering of anti-imperialists, whose delegates included Jawaharlal Nehru of India and Madame Sun Yat-sen of China, of the bitter lot of the enslaved African people. Speaking of communism, he said:

> "I am happy to say that there are Communists in South Africa. I myself am not one, but it is my experience that the Communist Party is the only party that stands behind us and from which we can expect something".

On his return to South Africa, he repeated the same point in his Presidential report to the ANC annual conference in June 1927. "Of all political parties", he said, "The Communist Party is the only one that honestly and sincerely fights for the oppressed people".

The conference showed its confidence in J. Gumede and his militant policies by re-electing him as President-General for a further three year term, with Comrade E J. Khaile, a member of the Communist Party as General Secretary.

In November 1927 Gumede went to Moscow to attend the tenth anniversary celebrations of the October Revolution. He was deeply impressed by his travels in the Soviet Union. "I have been to the new Jerusalem", he said later.

The shift in the Party's emphasis had brought a very substantial access of membership, transforming the composition of the Party. From a minority in 1924, African Communists by 1928, comprised the great majority—1,600 out of 1,750.

This transformation, however, was not adequately reflected either by the Party's leadership or in its policy and perspective. It is true that the fifth National Conference had elected Makabeni, Khaile and Thibedi to the Central Committee, but the officials were all whites as was the delegation appointed to the Sixth Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow in July 1928.

The Comintern Debate of 1928

This Congress was a notable one from the South African viewpoint. In addition to surveying international and, especially, colonial problems, it, for the first time, gave specific attention to a discussion on South Africa. The discussion had been preceded by talks between the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) and James La Guma, who had represented the CPSA at the celebration of the revolution, the previous November. He reported the gist of those discussions on his return, and consequently the Party had an opportunity to discuss the views of the ECCI and to mandate its delegation accordingly. That mandate was one of uncompromising opposition to the new direction of policy being proposed by the leadership of the International, the relevant section being that:

> "The Party must determinedly and consistently put forward the creation of an independent native republic, with simultaneous guarantees for the rights of the white minority, and struggle in deeds for its realisation".

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The brief resolution that was adopted was not, nor was it intended to be, a detailed analysis of the South African situation. But it did pinpoint and stress the very weaknesses in the work and propaganda of the Party until then, and the erroneous position expounded by its delegation at the Congress.

A more thorough explanation and elaboration of the viewpoint of the international communist movement was embodied in a special resolution on "the South African question" adopted by the Executive Committee of the CI later in the year. In their arguments against the CI approach the South African delegation brought out quite clearly the fundamental differences which existed between the international movement and its South African section.

These differences were not confined to a pragmatic assessment of the suitability of a particular slogan considered as a formula. They went to the heart of the ideological approach to the colonial and national question. Arguing the South African case. S. P. Bunting as head of the delegation criticised the frequent practice of the CI in its documents of referring to the "proletariat" of the capitalist countries and the "masses" in the colonies. He contended that the distinction was incorrect, and the implication that no fundamental difference existed between the two kinds of struggle was underscored by the South Africans' insistence that class, not national, issues were uppermost in South Africa.

In the Depression of the Thirties

It can be said with justice that many of the facts and formulations of the CI document need bringing up to date. But taken all in all it is a remarkable Marxist-Leninist appraisal of the fundamental structure of the character of South African society, whose aptness and relevance has been vindicated rather than made obsolete by the passage of time. Its emphasis on the "colonial type of country", on the "united white front for the exploitation of the native population" between British imperialism and the white South African bourgeoisie, recall the 1962 Programme adopted by the South African Communist Party, with the benefit of thirty years experience and study.

As a disciplined section of the Communist International, the Party in South Africa formally endorsed its decisions, at its Seventh Annual Conference in 1929.

Renamed *Umsebenzi* (in Zulu and Xhosa: "The Worker") the Party's journal, in several African languages, was reaching a bigger circulation than ever; vigorous efforts to build Party branches and African trade unions were strengthened in various parts of the country under the leadership of comrades like Nzula, Kotane and Marks in the Transvaal, Nkosi in Durban, Dambuza in Bloemfontein, Gomas, Ngedlane Ndobe and Tonjeni in the Western Cape. The Party called for a united front to join in a massive attack on the pass laws, designed to culminate in the burning of passes throughout the country on the symbolical date of December 16th —Dingaan's Day, when Boer and Zulu fought at the battle of Blood River.

The call fell on deaf ears as far as the leadership of the African people's movements were concerned.

The African National Congress had entered a period of temporary regression. The retiring President, Gumede opened its April 1930 national conference with a rousing appeal for militancy. He denounced imperialism and called on Africans to rally against any attack on the Soviet Union "the only real friend of all subjected races". He called on Congress to organise and the people to fight for "equal economic, social and political rights', for 'a South African Native Republic with equal rights for all, and free from all foreign and local domination".

The speech was strongly supported by militants and workers at the conference. But the right-wing conservative elements who packed the conference carried the day. They secured the defeat of Gumede's candidature for re-election as President and the return of an executive, headed by Dr. Seme, by then advanced in years, and dominated by compromisers who held back the growth of Congress for several years.

Nevertheless the Communist Party continued alone with its plan for Dingaan's Day demonstrations. The greatest of these was in Durban, where thousands of Africans gathered to the Party platform to hear Johannes Nkosi and other speakers.

At this demonstration Johannes Nkosi was murdered by the South African police, together with three other African workers attending the demonstration.

Following the Dingaan's Day murders, the Hertzog-Pirow government unleased a storm of terror and repression in Durban and other Natal towns from which the movement took many years to recover, and the working class movement throughout the country was subjected to an unprecedented wave of repression.

Nevertheless the Communist Party, at a time when the national liberation movement was at a low ebb, courageously maintained its stand. Unemployment was rising steeply as a result of the world depression, and the Communist Party was in the vanguard of the movement to organise

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jobless workers to demand bread and "work or wages".

Few leading active Communists escaped imprisonment at that period, even though the Party enjoyed formal legality.

Inner-Party Strife

Unfortunately the thirties were also a period when the Communist Party itself was torn by internal strife of a sort which seriously undermined its strength and influence without truly enlightening its path. Indeed, the principle outcome was confusion.

A dogmatic, sectarian tendency had developed within the International Communist movement and the Comintern in the late twenties, and this was transmitted to South Africa by D. G. Wolton, who visited Moscow before his return to South Africa at the end of 1930, armed with the status of a "CI representative". Wolton had convinced the ECCI that Bunting was the chief representative of a "serious right-wing danger". An international campaign was then in progress against right-wingers who were considered the main danger within the international movement, and the ECCI apparently accepted Wolton's version implicitly.

Bunting was acting secretary at the time Wolton replaced him, and was elected general secretary in January 1931. He was joined in the leadership with Lazar Bach, a young Latvian immigrant. Accused of various right-wing deviations, a number of well-known members were expelled from the Party. They included two of the senior founders of the Party: W. H. Andrews and S. P. Bunting.

A furious debate arose within the membership, especially among the intellectuals, over the alleged extent, role and influence of the "native bourgeoisie". Arguing "from the book" and the documents of the Comintern, Bach greatly exaggerated the influence and importance of African capitalists, and accused those who disagreed with him of being virtually "agents of the bourgeoisie". The ANC and similar liberation movements were seen, in this view, as "bourgeois" movements, not broad alliances, including the workers. The effect of this arid and academic argument was to counterpose the Party against the liberation movement, to ignore the need for a united national front for the democratic revolution.

Kotane and other leading members challenged these views but unfortunately the debate was conducted against a background and atmosphere of suspicion and intrigue which repelled many members and supporters and failed to stimulate creative thinking. Kotane was removed from the editorship of *Umsebenzi* and a number of his supporters were expelled from Party membership. He later expressed the view that, had he not left Johannesburg for Cape Town, he too would have been subjected to the same summary treatment.

The sectarian period finally ended. Andrews was subsequently readmitted to the Party, served for a number of years as Chairman and remained a member of the Central Committee to the end, as did J. La Guma. Many of the others expelled in the thirties had immersed themselves in trade union work or drifted out of politics. S. P. Bunting died on May 25th, 1936. *Umsebenzi,* the Party organ published a tribute to his memory, recalling his honesty and devotion, and his great contribution as the first to recognise the importance of the Africans. "Thousands of exploited and oppressed South Africans", it concluded, "will remember Comrade Bunting as a staunch fighter".

The acrimonious disputes of the early thirties left deep scars within the Party, especially in Johannesburg, the Party's headquarters, where bitter personal hostilities had developed among leading personnel.

Fight Against Fascism

The rising tide of fascism in Europe had a major impact in South Africa. Especially after the Nazi victory in Germany, Hitler's ideas and methods found admirers among the white chauvinists, especially among Afrikaner nationalists, fertile soil for "Herrenvolk" propaganda. Openly Nazi movements, patterned unashamedly on the German pattern were set up, such as the Greyshirts. More significant was the obvious influence both of German imperialism and Nazi ideology at the highest levels of South African politics and within the Cabinet itself.

Oswald Pirow, who had been appointed Minister of Defence was the most outspoken admirer of the Third Reich. Even the Prime Minister, Hertzog, leaned increasingly towards Nazism. Malan's Nationalist Party became deeply infected with the virus: Influential Nationalists like Vorster, Verwoerd, Strydom, Eric Louw and others became increasingly outspoken in their Nazi sympathies.

These developments did not go unnoted and unchallenged. Foremost in alerting the South African people to the danger of facism and war was the Communist Party.

In 1935 when Mussolini's troops and bombing planes launched a savage war of colonial conquest against the last remaining independent African state, the Party's "Hands off Ethiopia!" campaign won enthusiastic mass support, especially among Africans and other oppressed peoples. As a result of this campaign non-white dockers at

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Cape Town gave a splendid example of international solidarity, refusing to load goods destined for the Italian army.

The trade union movement, represented by the Trades and Labour Council, began to take a more active part in the political struggle against fascism.

Supported by the Party, bodies such as the Anti-Fascist League carried out a series of effective campaigns, both in the towns and the rural areas. Demonstrations of solidarity with the Spanish and Czechoslovak people, protests against the Munich sell-out, and for friendship with the Soviet Union, received enthusiastic support.

At the same time, representing militant forces among the working class and the youth, several organisations arose to challenge the ineffective and reformist leadership which prevailed in various sections of the liberation movement at that time.

The Communist Party in the Second World War

The outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939 split the Cabinet and the "fused" United Party into its component parts. As in the first world war, Smuts demanded that the country go to war, together with Britain; Hertzog proposed neutrality. On a vote in Parliament, the Smuts section won. Hertzog resigned as Prime Minister. The country was at war.

The leadership of the Communist Party, like their predecessors of the ISL in 1914, assessed the character of the war from the viewpoint of the class interests of the workers, of working class internationalism. They said the war was being fought by British imperialism not to defeat fascism but "to maintain British dominance in Europe, to defend British colonies and retain British trade and investments overseas against a rival imperialism".

However the Party could not lose sight of the fact that the white opposition to the war was being conducted by the Nationalist Party, deeply penetrated by fascist ideas, whose proposed "neutrality" was one which would have drawn them into further support for German imperialism and lead to the imposition of a fascist regime internally. The Party's role during this period was to oppose the war and resist the pro-fascist Nationalist Party.

The Nazi Attack on the Soviet Union

A profound change in the international situation, and in the character and direction of the war, resulted from the all-out Nazi aggression against the Soviet Union in June 1941. After prolonged discussions, the Party decided to support the war and demanded that South Africa make a full contribution to the common victory over Nazism.

South Africa's armed forces were confined exclusively to the white minority of the population. (Africans and other non-whites were recruited at a fraction of their pay for non-combatant duties.) The Party demanded that Africans be armed and recruited with equal status, and vigorously criticised the government's half-hearted prosecution of the fight against fascism at home and abroad. A *Call to the People* issued by the Central Committee in October 1941, declared "that the struggle against Fascism requires the extension of the fullest democratic rights to all sections of the people in South Africa, the suppression of the open supporters of Hitlerism, the removal from the army, the police, the civil service and Parliament of the agents of Hitler, the ending of capitalist inefficiencies, waste and profiteering".

On the basis of this policy the Party campaigned vigorously throughout the country. The left-wing, English-language, weekly — *The Guardian*—which was established with the aid of Party members in 1938, played a leading role in espousing this policy. So too, did the Party's official journal—*Inkululeko* (Freedom)—which published articles in Sotho, Zulu, Tswana, Ihosa, Venda and Shangaan languages. both journals steadily increased their circulation throughout the country.

Constant public meetings and a stream of Party publications as well as the tremendous impact and impression created in South Africa by the heroic resistance of the Soviet people, aroused the political consciousness of the people of the country to a higher level. Servicemen and women flocked into the Springbok Legion, in which Communists played a prominent part.

A new drive to organise unorganised workers in trade unions was marked by a steady growth in the membership and activity of African unions.

Between 1941 and 1943 the membership of the Party grew fourfold. The growth of working class consciousness was paralleled by a new surge of militancy in the liberation movements. The Youth League of the African National Congress, headed by Anton Lembede, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Joe Matthews and others, despite certain ideological differences with Marxism, found common ground with the Communists in their demands for a more positive and revolutionary leadership in the ANC and a change from stereotyped and ineffective methods of struggle to radical mass action.

Unity of Communists and non-Communists in the common struggle for national liberation was

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carried an important stage forward with the dynamic anti-pass campaign of 1944-45, presided over by Dr. A. B. Xuma, then ANC President-General, and headed among others by Y. M. Dadoo, M. Kotane, E. T. Mofutsanyana, J. B. Marks and A. Maliba.

After World War II

The end of the war in Europe, in May 1945 with the triumphant entry of the Soviet Army into Berlin, was celebrated by a gigantic demonstration organised jointly in Johannesburg by the African National Congress, the Transvaal Indian Congress, the Council of Non-European Trade Unions and the Communist Party.

With the ending of the war, a fresh wave of bitter struggles broke out between the oppressed peoples and the reactionary ruling classes of South Africa. To each new attack our people responded with rising militancy, unity and political awareness, with their Communist Party and its members ever in the front ranks.

The year 1946 saw a remarkable revival of the South African Indian Congress, after a long period under sterile sectional leadership of men of the merchant class, following the departure to India of Gandhi. Indian workers and revolutionaries elected our comrade Dadoo to Congress President in the Transvaal, and his close colleague Dr. Naicker in Natal. The Smuts government, attempting to introduce its anti-Indian Ghetto Act in June 1946 was met with a powerful resistance campaign, in which thousands of disciplined volunteers were arrested for defiance, which had widespread repercussions in South Africa and abroad.

African Miners' Strike 1946

Profoundly significant was the African miners strike of 1946. The most exploited and oppressed workers of any, our miners had time and again begged the millionaires of the Chamber of Mines to give the workers an increase to the relatively small (compared with their mammoth profits!) wage of 10s. a day. The bosses refused even to meet the representatives of our Union, or to acknowledge their letters. At last on August 4th, at a mass, open-air conference, the workers unanimously decided to strike.

In the week that followed, August 12-19th, at least 100,000, a third of the African working force on the mines, took part in a stoppage that brought a large proportion of the mining industry to a standstill.

From the beginning to the end the Chamber of Mines and its agency, the government, "dealt with" this situation by means of force and terror. A special Cabinet sub-committee was set up to implement this policy. Two thousand armed police were drafted to the Witwatersrand and placed at the disposal of the Chamber and its compound managers with one clear objective: to break the strike and get the miners back to work. When intimidation by armed police failed, they charged with bayonets or opened fire to force the workers down the shafts. Hundreds of workers were killed and wounded (no official figures were ever released).

Members and supporters of the Party responded magnificently. Many spent the week with little or no sleep, going from their jobs at factories or offices to report to the ANWU offices to volunteer assistance; helping to roneo Union leaflets—the only contact with the miners during the reign of terror—distributing them at dawn to compounds.

The 1946 strike was broken by lawless and ruthless violence by the state. It was followed by a wave of repression against the miners and their union. Massive victimisation was followed by even more intensive methods of regimentation, terror and espionage that ended open union activity among African miners for a generation.

Attacks and Arrests

The week following the strike saw police raids on the offices of the Communist Party and *The Guardian*, and the homes of their officials and staff, in all the main towns of the country. Hundreds of documents and files were seized.

The mine workers chairman J. B. Marks, M. Kotane, the general secretary of the CPSA, and the members of the Johannesburg District Party Committee were among 52 accused in a mass trial in Johannesburg of a "conspiracy" to bring about the strike.

The charge of "conspiracy" was later dropped; nearly all those accused were found guilty of assisting the African miners in their strike, in itself of course illegal: a charge which they did not deny.

In November 1946 the members of the Central Executive Committee of the Party in Cape Town were arrested in connection with the strike and faced with a number of serious charges, including "sedition". The charges were flimsy and were ultimately thrown out by the court. The answer of the people and their organisations to the government's attack was to intensify and unify their struggle. 1947 saw the laying of the basis of the great Congress Alliance, the fighting united liberation front of South Africa, when the African and Indian Congress leaders signed the historic Xuma-Dadoo-Naicker agreement. The ANC discarded its old futile policies of representations and fruitless deputations. A turn was made to militant policies of mass action: of revolution.

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Struggle in Illegality

The attack of the Smuts government on the Communist Party, the working class and the national liberation movement was the prelude to even more vicious attacks by its successor: the neo-Nazi Nationalist Party, headed successively by Malan, Strijdom, Verwoerd and Vorster. The country was turned into an armed camp: a fascist police state. The people, deprived of all possibilities of peaceful advance turned more and more to the path of revolutionary armed struggle. The Suppression of Communism Act (1950) declared the Communist Party of South Africa to be an "unlawful organisation". It prohibited the advocacy of Marxism-Leninism and laid down stringent penalties for all who had ever been members or supporters of the Party.

That the Party had to some extent been influenced by legalistic illusions is evidenced by the hasty decision of the Central Committee to dissolve it; but the firmness of Marxist-Leninist principles of the great majority of its members, including most of the members of the former CC, was demonstrated by their courageous participation in the dangerous work of rebuilding the South African Communist Party in conditions of illegality.

Over the past twenty years, as our people have advanced from one united mass struggle to another, and to preparations for armed struggle and civil war, the revolutionary masses of South Africa and their Communist Party have reached their greatest heights.

The names of our martyrs: heroes like Mbeki, Fischer, Kathrada and many others are known to all the world, together with all those non-Communist revolutionaries whose very names are a banner to the oppressed people everywhere.

At the same time, our Party—particularly in its programme, *The Road to South African Freedom* adopted in 1962—has raised the Marxist-Leninist approach to the problems of our country to a higher level than ever before. In particular, our party has developed in theory and in practice a unity in struggle between the working-class and national liberation movements which has succeeded in harnessing the support of the oppressed masses and drawing tens of thousands of them into organised political activity. If political consciousness and experience at the rank-and-file level as well as amongst the leadership is richer in our country than anywhere else on the African continent, this is in no small measure due to the contribution made over the past 50 years by the South African Communist Party.

Standing always at the centre of resistance to racist tyranny, our Party has sustained the heaviest blows of the enemy, but emerged with greater strength and confidence in the principles of Communism and internationalism; of victory for our people and for the working class. This confidence is fully reflected in our programme, in the documents issued by the party from time to time, in the pages of our journal the *African Communist* and in the proceedings of the leading bodies of our party.

It is not practicable to detail the history of an illegal, underground Party in an article of this sort, at this time; that is a task which awaits future historians. But we feel that the experience of these years justifies the confidence of our Party in the future of our country.

On the Road to South African Freedom

The Augmented Central Committee meeting of the Party which was held in 1970 declared that "political and social developments in South Africa confirm the analysis made in our programme that the objective conditions exist for a national democratic revolution that will destroy South African imperialism, win the national liberation of the African and other oppressed people, and bring about profound democratic changes in line with the demands of the Freedom Charter" (adopted at the historic Congress of the People in 1955).

"In this situation the Party calls upon the working people of our country and especially the workers and oppressed African and non-White peoples to unite their ranks, to resist tyrannical domination in every sphere and by every means, and to work for the conquest of power by the people.

"Paying tribute to the heroism of the fighting men of Umkhonto we Sizwe, it pledges its unqualified support for the liberation army in its aim to recruit and train guerrilla fighters, to spread the area of guerrilla war to the heart of the Republic.

"Believing firmly that the building of our Party as the Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the working class is a vitally important contribution to the victory in the common struggle, the meeting instructs the Central Committee to direct its main efforts to the reconstruction of the Party at home as an organisation of professional revolutionaries, closely in contact with the working class and peasantry and able to carry on the propaganda and organisation of the Party in the face of police terror".

On its 50th anniversary the Party pledges itself to carry on with its great task until final victory is won.

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Anarchist Ideas Today

Mick Costello

(This article is, in a sense, a continuation of the author's study on "Some Aspects of Anarchist Philosophy" published in the March 1970 "Marxism Today")

When discussing Anarchism today one is not dealing with *organisations* of Anarchists so much as with relics of old ideas which are still around. One is also dealing with some organisations which are not wholly anarchistic or, sometimes, even mainly so in their outlook. Yet, and last in order of importance, there are still in Britain some organisations which are quite straightforward in continuing the heritage of the anarchist thinkers and fighters of the last century and the beginning of this one.

Most frequently anarchist ideas are met among super-militants who advocate the total rejection of everything found in any society in the world today, while putting as the alternative little more than a blurred vision of people, somehow or other, living in peace and harmony, with no-one leading and no-one contributing to the organisation of society in a way different from his fellows.

An attempt to sketch the historical background to anarchism today was made in a previous article (*Marxism Today*, March 1970). There it was argued that anarchism "had its natural place" with the early development of the modern proletariat, and that it carried with it basic propositions that are foreign to a scientific working class outlook. This feature of it, since its beginnings, remains true to this day, however active anarchists might be in day to day conscious struggle against capitalist oppression and against some of its worst and most blatant debasement of people.

British Anarchist Organisations

But we have to look at the fact that anarchist ideas are by no means dead by the '70's of the 20th century, even if movements which regard themselves as anarchist are not widespread.

First it might be useful to say something about the direct inheritors of the black international of Bakunin and Kropotkin, before going on to the much more frequently encountered forms of anarchism which do not recognise themselves as such. After that some views will be put about *why* anarchist ideas are with us, what it is that nurtures them even in a highly industrialised country and in a world where they have not succeeded anywhere in changing a society for the better.

In Britain today there is one principal anarchist centre of the traditional kind, the Anarchist Federation of Britain (AFB), although the absence of a movement behind it tends to confine its activities to discussion. It publishes *Freedom*, a newspaper (almost weekly) which is now in its 85th year, a monthly theoretical journal, *Anarchy*, and it owns a publishing house, *Freedom Press*. It counts some 70 local "groups", although some of these are little more than a name and address for making contact. There is no such thing as a membership in the AFB.

The AFB campaigns, through its newspaper, for alleviating the conditions of those members of the population who live in the worst possible conditions. These anarchists have been active in the squatters' movement, and the paper has given prominence to the fight for democratic rights in Northern Ireland, to students at the London School of Economics and at Warwick University, to the Isle of Dogs, and CS gas. Their favourite targets have been all forms of activity associated with elections, the political parties (all of them) and God.

Although it has dropped the slogan "For Workers' Control" from its sub-title, *Freedom* supports all forms of unofficial action by workers, clearly counterposing these to the idea of leadership in well-organised trade unions. Of late, the Pilkington strike, the battle by militant shop stewards on the London St. Thomas' Hospital Building Site, have been adopted by them. In general, they espouse the cause of the lowest paid, counterposing them to those who have already succeeded in winning better conditions. Thus, a writer who signs himself "Lumpenproletariat" drew attention to the case of a woman worker who was in a factory where the Factory Act was systematically violated. But he thought it helpful to sneer at Ford workers as "the prima donnas of the industrial scene", because they are better paid, and he suggested that her conditions could be improved without the higher paid workers such as at Fords showing what could be achieved.

As reminders of the anarchist approach to the state, some headlines can be quoted: "All Law is Gun Law", "The Great Con" (i.e. the General Election), "All Power to the People—how much longer will we tolerate governments?"

Another organisation is Solidarity for Workers'

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Power, which publishes *Solidarity* and also specialises in direct action attacks on social iniquities. It publishes the results of research on some of these, and also historical documents such as on the Workers' Opposition in Russia (1921) and the Kronstadt Uprising against the Soviet government (1921).

There are other claimants to the heritage of different anarchist lines, including the Syndicalist Workers' Federation, Coptic Press (both of which print pamphlets on philosophy and aims) and various other groups, smaller even than these.

None of these bodies has any following in the working class, and virtually none anywhere else. Some anarchists have been active against bad housing, homelessness, the persecution of gipsies, on the recent events in Northern Ireland and other questions offering opportunities for direct action. But their supporters tend to divide sharply on tactics. For some there is no such thing as a political struggle—everything must directly lead to the Revolution ("The Revolution is Now").

Others become so immersed in the immediate problems as to lose sight of any perspective of struggle and social change, and become something akin to social workers only. Indeed, several of the leaders of the 1968 squatters campaigns in Ilford, Essex, did take jobs as "official squatters" for a London Borough Council and in June it was learned that another was offered houses by the Greater London Council, for him to act as agent in settling in some needy families. This is not to criticise them for doing social work, but to make a distinction between social work and Revolution.

But Anarchist ideas are much more widespread than the limits of influence of the above mentioned groups.

Syndicalists

Syndicalism, an adaptation of anarchism to more highly industrialised societies, has put forward the general strike as the means of social transformation, and syndicalist (leaderless) trade unionism as the weapon for this. No such unions exist in Britain. Although British syndicalists point to the union centre in Sweden which claims to be syndicalist, as a living example of what can be achieved, in fact the *Sveriges Arbetares Central* organisation, with 20,000 members today, is simply a trade union which voices syndicalist objectives.

Nonetheless, in Britain today, although dying out, the view that industrial unionism can change society still persists. This is particularly true in the form of the idea that a well-organised trade union can not only protect the work conditions of its members in the daily struggle against the employer, but can provide protection on all matters, and itself be the vehicle for social change.

These views are nowhere more strongly held than among workers with a long experience of industrial unionism. In South Wales, for instance, there was this experience and, until quite recently, it was added to by there being virtually only one major industry and one union to fight on behalf of the workers. Remnants of syndicalist ideas are still a barrier to building a political party which fights for socialism in the political field. South Wales was coal; the workers were in the miners' union; all matters of social concern were to be tackled by that union.

Pit closures, where forces outside the industry have shown themselves so clearly to prevail against the strength of the union, and in a wider battlefield than the mines themselves, have given a severe knock to these ideas. But it is taking a long and bitter experience by the miners to overcome the initial demoralisation that the new situation brought about. With the experience of the industry teaching some severe lessons the ground is being cut from under the syndicalist ideas.

Appeal to "Lumpen"

Some anarchists have seen in the revolt of the lower paid in the past year a vindication of their traditional outlook, that it is the most wretched and debased, the *Lumpenproletariat*, who will lead the fight for a better social order. They would identify this with Bakunin's "flower of the proletariat . . . that rabble which, being very nearly unpolluted by all bourgeois civilisation . . . alone is powerful enough today to inaugurate the Social Revolution. . . ."

Quite apart from the fact that a century's experience since Bakunin's words has come up with no *Lumpen* Revolution anywhere in the world, the lower paid today have taken part in the wages explosion where they have *not* been *Lumpen*. It is the *low paid workers organised in trade unions* who have pushed up their wages of late—the dustmen, trawlermen, building workers, council officers and so on. And they have done this through trade unions whose leaderships contain many craftsmen. The picture of organised craftsmen who are not interested in unorganised lower-paid workers, a feature of Britain when it was "the workshop of the world", is not true today.

Left Fringe

A host of anarchistic ideas are to be found among sections of the extreme left fringe of the socialist movement, among people who would most vehemently deny this.

Their common factor is an inheritance of the Achilles heel of classical anarchism—lack of understanding of the nature of the state. Their demands for "red bases" in the universities,

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"changing society by winning everyone to their ideas", "every social conflict a miniature revolution", "turning every fight for better conditions into a demand for revolution", "confrontation", and a galaxy of other slogans and "revolutionary" phrases allow one to identify them. Supporters of such demands are, basically, unable to relate struggles to end some of the most grotesque forms of suffering under capitalism in the short-term, and the struggle to end capitalism itself.

Ironically, it is their seeing the two as one and the same thing on a time scale, that presents the problem. On the one hand, some see all the importance of a particular action in the extent to which it might tangibly bring about social change there and then; on the other, some tend to abandon the importance of social change for the immediate purpose of trying to end some individual's suffering. Neither, then, makes any contribution to advancing the level of political consciousness of the people they might involve in struggle on an issue.

The first outlook is disastrously ignorant of what work needs to be done to win the working people for the idea of a need for basic social change. The second tends to make no serious attempt to offer anything other than piece-meal change in conditions under capitalism.

In the extreme left fringe the two ends of the crescent meet under a black and scarlet banner. Anarchist championing of personal liberty and the belief that social revolution is always possible today, and Trotskyist irresponsible advocacy of pushing each and every struggle beyond its utmost, till the "revolutionaries" are always in the end left on their own, "betrayed" by the masses. Both work against building unity of all possible forces for progress, and both do the job of the ruling class enemy, by splitting the workers' ranks almost wherever they alight. It is not surprising, therefore, that both are regarded with the utmost suspicion in the labour movement, and that many revolutionaries see no difference between them and police provocateurs.

Students

Communists wholeheartedly welcome the new militancy among students and the rapidly growing awareness that it is not enough to tinker with capitalism for ever and ever, but that capitalism itself must be ended. Communists have also been most active in winning white collar workers to understand the changing technological circumstances which themselves make it easier for them to see that they are workers, too. With the recent upsurge of militant activity in the colleges and universities, (and this has many of the elements of a revolutionary upsurge directed at changing the social set-up) all sorts of ideas are being thrown into the melting-pot of wide discussion. Partly because of the real weaknesses in communist organisation, but principally because of the persistent strength of traditional social-democratic teachings about the state and classes, some of these are as far from being working class ideas, as their holders believe they are near to them.

Right-wing Labour sees a benevolent cricket umpire sort of state, sometimes like a chastising father, but always with the interests of all his children at heart, the poor and the rich, the exploiters and the workers.

It would be a slander to say that this is how anarchists see things. But there is a much easier path from the non-militants' view of a benevolent state to the anarchist view of a malevolent one. Far more complex is the change in outlook demanded by Marxism—to see the state as the instrument of one class against another, and, therefore, sometimes as the weapon of the enemy and in different social conditions the instrument of the working class, but never neutral. After all, students and also professional workers of the one-time liberal professions, notwithstanding the rapid changes in their conditions of study and work which are brought about by changes in the processes of production which are themselves spurred on by today's scientific and technological revolution, do still have difficulty in identifying their own class allegiance (as do many workers) and this confusion promotes some militants to take a non-class view of the state. This trend is anarchist.

Confrontation

It is only one step from there to advocate the "red bases" within capitalism, which will allegedly multiply, so that the initial small red dots on the map of Britain will spread to become blobs and in the end stretch from shore to shore. The guild socialism of the Fabians and many ideas of the early pioneers of the co-operative retail and wholesale movements were imbued with similar concepts, even if they did not couch them in Marxist phraseology. "Red bases" can only exist where there is no state, certainly nowhere in highly industrialised and populated Britain. If, as some of their advocates claim, inspiration was found for them in the heroic history of the Chinese revolution, then those so inspired should take more account of certain different geographical features about China and more important the fact that there existed no powerful centralised state control of the whole country before 1949 (or 1957? even if one is to take Tibet into account).

"Confrontation" again, in Britain today, or at any time, without looking hard at the relations of forces of the social classes and at the effectiveness of the state in the hands of one of them, can have

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no possible part to play in bringing about the revolution in Britain. When circumstances are not ripe "confrontation" equals provocation of reprisals against militants, and the "provocateurs" would be more usefully occupied building an organised force which can give leadership when a revolutionary situation demands it.

This is one of the salutary lessons of the experience in Indonesia in 1965. It was the high level of political consciousness and discipline of the French working class and the leadership given to it by the Communists that resisted the irresponsible calls of anarchist militants like Daniel Cohn-Bendit to go to the barricades in May/June 1968, when this would have resulted in similar heroic, but futile bloodbaths, with the working class being slaughtered. Today the students in France have understood this and the Communist student organisation is again, beyond question, the recognised political force of the left, bar none, in the colleges and universities, just as the Party is within the working class.

No Marxist would argue that times for confrontations of *classes* never come—but he would argue that one has to choose as far as possible the times for confrontation when circumstances suggest that there is a possibility (one can never demand more) of winning more than is expended. It is also no Marxist proposition that sharp confrontation comes *only* in a revolutionary situation—witness the sharpest clash of class interests for decades in Britain, which led in 1969 to the defeat of Labour's plans for penal legislation against the trade unions. The fight last year by the dock workers against the port bosses (backed by a State of Emergency) was another class confrontation.

White Collar Workers

It is relevant, and instructive, to point out here that Anarchists (and Trotskyists) and other super-militants were most revealingly shown to have played no part in the dockers' battle, no more than they did in mobilising the hundreds of thousands of workers who took part in the February 27 and May 1 one-day strikes in 1969 which defeated the jla ns of the reactionaries to put a legal strait-packet on the unions. These were true confrontations.

The super-militants also came in very much at the tail end of the campaigns for the November 14th conference and December 8th day of industrial action (both in 1970) against the Tory attempts to follow-on where Right-wing Labour was forced to suspend its attack on the organisations of the working class. Posing demands for a level of militant action far beyond the real possibilities at each stage in the campaign they make no positive contribution to mobilising workers. So it was also with the actions on January 12th this year.

Communists, (and not Anarchists) working with other socialists can point to real successes in bringing together workers by hand and brain against the forces of monopoly capitalism. This necessary step for building the greatest possible unity of the working class, without which there can be no fundamental social changes has been more their property than that of the anarchists, who have, paradoxically, always based their theories on the maximum number of people (if not all!) effecting social change. Once again, the reason why anarchists have not contributed to this important development is because they have no conception of *stages* on their way to reaching an objective.

The affiliation of the National Union of Teachers, one hundred years after it was founded, to the family of workers in the Trades Union Congress early last year was a tangible demonstration of what can be achieved by correct methods of work. Yet it was remarkable that members of a group called "Rank and File", which has strong anti-leadership, anarchist conceptions and which wants the Revolution to appear on the immediate agenda at every stage in the struggle for a better life, probably underestimated the changes in the NUT more than anyone else. "After all", the outlook of some of their adherents suggested, "things have not changed to such a degree that all is won". Such an approach is bound to lead to demoralisation at every stage, because stages *in the course* of a battle cannot all be the conclusion to it. This outlook regards every partial victory as a defeat—"because it does not go far enough".

The amalgamation, which took effect from January 1st this year, of the Draughtsmen and Allied Technicians' Association with the shop floor and building engineering unions, to form the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers is another achievement of patient revolutionary work in uniting the different sections of the working class. Without this unity, and at a level much higher than today's, monopoly capitalism cannot be overthrown.

Why the Influence?

Yet why is it that so many young people incline towards anarchistic ideas? It would be easy, but a self-delusion, to say the answer is only that anarchism is relatively simple in its basic propositions, that it appears to offer a quick return for an investment of energy, that it is a natural outlook for militants who lack class understanding, or that it does not differ fundamentally from reformist ideas which are widely held, when one comes down to what underlies both approaches to society. There is some truth in all these things, but, when put together they do not add up to a complete picture, not by any means.

Lenin once said that anarchism is not infrequently

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the price paid by the working class movement for the sins of opportunism. Lenin's brilliant insight into a problem is also shown in this way of putting this problem. It is as true today as it ever was.

Reformism

The basic "sins of the working class movement" today are its reformist ideas. Right-wing Labour reformism has held back revolutionary thought in many ways in Britain, as in other countries. It has not only done this by outright betrayals of workers' struggles, as during the 1926 general strike, or by siding with American imperialism after the Second World War instead of with the countries which had thrown out capitalism, or today daily betraying the long-term interests of British workers and the immediate aspirations of those in Indo-China. These are only some of the obvious results of something that itself needs looking at to explain one of the generator's of modern anarchist ideas—the philosophy of Right-wing Labour.

The ideas of reformism are directed first and foremost at obscuring the nature of the class struggle, invariably blunting the weapons of the working class. They would shroud the realities of class society in a fug of ill-defined shadows. Everything is reduced to a uniform grey, presented as a static whole. Thus, they teach that Britain possesses a benevolent State for all, a national cake which all are to share in according to their deserts, a national interest which unites all, and so on. Similarly they present the Soviet Union and all other countries as grey wholes. There is left no legitimate movement for change anywhere. All *movement*, which might upset accepted norms and practices is said to be created by a fringe of out-of-date greedy capitalists, on the one hand, and a corresponding opposite fringe of out-of-date disrupters, on the other.

The simplest direct reaction in a person who comes to realise that this image of society is completely false, and that it does not apply anywhere in the world, is to reject it completely. But the same person is not often, at the initial stages of "rejection", free of all the *basic* prejudices he held while he still accepted the reformist interpretations of them. He initially only rejects the reformist interpretations but continues to look at the state, etc. in absolute terms, just as before. The state becomes bad, the national cake unimportant and national interests are rejected as not being of any importance whatsoever.

How different this is from an outlook free of the basic misconceptions of reformism, which takes a very different attitude to the state, the cake and the nation. Such an outlook has a yardstick, by which it measures and then judges the state, the cake and the nation. This yardstick is the Marxist class approach. It asks: what state? Who makes and who eats the cake? The "national interests" of which class, of whom?

Intentions of Reformists

In categorising some ideas as "anarchistic" they must be distinguished from reformist ideas in Britain at the end of the 20th century. The reformists, who once upon a time in history, sought to bring about *fundamental* change in society by piece-meal changes which took no account of the class nature of the State apparatus, no longer even seek to do this. Their objective is now, to make life under capitalism more enjoyable, full stop. Their old place has now been taken by groups with anarchistic ideas—who would also change society fundamentally through gradual means—red bases, workers' control (in the understanding of those who see this as a means for changing society), students' power, workers' power, black power, and so on.

Thus, many anarchistic ideas today have no more real revolutionary content than did the ideas of the social reformers who played the major part in the formation of the Labour Party. Ironically they have taken up the banner which was dropped by the Right-wing Labour leaders in their haste to win recognition (and the votes) of parts of the population which were not interested in basic social reform at all. This is the main cause of widespread non-class, but reforming ideas, outside the Right-wing apparatus.

The holders of these anarchistic views might regard this as slander, for are they not attacked by the Establishment as enemies of everything fundamental to present-day capitalist society? They are attacked, as the ruling class attacked the reformists at the beginning of the present century, before it learnt to incorporate them. But whenever there is a choice before the ruling class, of bashing Communists, or of bashing anarchists—they have always chosen the first. It was the father of Marxism in Russia, George Plekhanov, who pointed this out many years ago. We saw a clear demonstration of this during the May/June events in France in 1968.

Image of Socialist Countries

However, there are other reasons for people coming to choose what they think is a way to change the present system, and which is not the one put forward by Marxists, by the Communist Party. Very important among these is their knowledge, or understanding (or lack of) of the system in the Soviet Union and the other 13 countries where capitalism is ended.

Communists are aware of the objective role

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played by these countries in the struggles against world war, and for the political and economic independence of the vast majority of the peoples of the world who were, or are still under the domination of the imperialist countries. The tributes paid by national leaders in Algeria, Cuba, the Congo, Vietnam, Cambodia and elsewhere, on all continents, bear clear witness to this, whatever capitalist or Trotskyist propaganda might pretend.

Yet, this capitalist propaganda does have a great effect. For instance, while many hundreds of thousands of people in Britain do see the role of the Vietnamese and Cuban Communists, they are able to separate this in their minds from what they consider to be the role of Communists of other socialist countries, who are not so obviously involved in direct confrontation with imperialism. This greatly affects the attractive image of socialism in practice.

However, more important even than this, is the popular image of the internal structure of social and political life in the socialist countries. Lenin held that the attractive power of socialism in practice was the most important contribution a socialist country could make to world Revolution. And the revelations of the reality of some aspects of Soviet life under Stalin's rule, the realities today of lack of political and intellectual freedoms in the socialist countries, the military intervention in Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1968, the evidence of the Polish Party's being divorced from the people which was so clearly shown by the rioting in Poland at the end of last year—have all damaged this image of what socialism should be like. The distortions of socialism in these countries have given a false basis to capitalist propaganda against socialism itself.

As pointed out by Professor B. Zaharescu, Rumanian member of the editorial board of *World Marxist Review* in the December 1970 number of the journal: "If we achieve rapid and harmonious progress in economy, culture, living standard and democracy, the workers in the capitalist countries will be satisfied that it is well worth fighting for socialism". Problems in the development in all four of the mentioned spheres of life in the socialist countries have provided fruit for anarchist-type criticism of the state structures in those countries.

The conflict between the Soviet Union and China and the prolonged and bitter polemics which preceded it, the semi-rupture of State relations between these two great socialist countries have added to weakening what Lenin believed was the most important world contribution of the socialist countries.

In all this one must bear in mind that the revival of anarchist ideas (and of Trotskyist ones, for that matter) date from the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the revelations of which was the first of a whole series of body-blows to the Communist movement in the most highly developed capitalist countries. These are the very countries in which the battle between socialism and capitalism will eventually be decided—where, in the words of the "Internationale", the "last fight" will be faced. During the worst years of the cold war there was no such revival of these false alternatives to communism. Apart from refuting lying bourgeois propaganda about the socialist countries, discussion such as has been conducted in *Marxism Today* on how the deformations arose is of the greatest importance for the battle against Anarchist ideas.

Freedom

This takes us naturally onto another feature of anarchist philosophy which assumes a new importance in today's anarchist thinking—the emphasis placed on absolute freedom for the individual.

It is not the place here to go in detail into the way in which Marxism treats freedom: *not* as an absolute quality that has any meaning at any time separated from the class realities of any society. But it is pertinent to be highly critical of what until quite recently was a frequently encountered approach to freedom by Communists. This treated it as something mechanically arising from economic processes once these economic processes came under State ownership. It is, even today, quite fashionable to speak of "two" basic freedoms—"economic" and "political", as if anywhere and at any time, particularly in a socialist country, these can be other than two *aspects* of one and the same thing.

Communists have to be absolutely categorical in stating that there is a close relation between "economic freedom" and "political freedom", particularly in a socialist country. "Economic freedom" itself cannot be conceived of simply in terms of state *ownership*, as the post-war experience of nationalisation in our country has so clearly demonstrated. Democratic *administration* is intrinsic to this aspect of freedom, as much as to "political freedom".

Anarchists have profited from lack of clarity on this on the part of Communists. This has allowed them to elevate their abstract image of freedom, putting it forward as a false answer to the problems Communists have been grappling with in a real world where nothing must be done to give encouragement and facility to the class enemy.

An editorial article in the daily newspaper of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, *Pravda* said on June 9th, 1970:

> "The development of socialist society in the countries of the world system of socialism . . . is intimately bound up with improving socialist

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democracy, the system of political administration of society".

Improving this democracy will help cut the feet from under anarchist arguments about freedom in all parts of the world, as the socialist countries are part and parcel of the world socialist movement.

The Working Class

The last major question to be touched on in this article is the attitude of today's anarchists to the working class and its institutions.

In a country like Britain, whatever one's understanding of the role of classes in the historical process, one must see the working class as the major factor in effecting any social change today. The enormous preponderance of urban workers in the population almost automatically prevents the growth of ideas suggesting that any other non-exploiting class can play the major role. Ideas of peasant revolution in Britain are patently absurd.

Yet, for a number of years there were tendencies among the most rapidly expanding white collar sections of the population who are coming, in the course of the scientific and technological revolution, to join the "traditional working class", to see themselves as the new leading force. These included many students, the "apprentice technicians and scientists". They were learning quickly to think in new social categories, to try and understand what was happening to them. The very speed of change in their circumstances made them impatient with the appearance of inertia among the rest of the working class, its trade union and political organisations.

New sections in battle against capitalism were adopting non-class and anarchistic attitudes. They criticised union leaderships ("The Bureaucracy") and seemed hell-bent on doing away with any leadership.

But changes were taking place also throughout the middle and lower levels of industry. The "managerial revolution" has become also a "shop floor revolution" and with this the trade union leaderships began to move in a way the anarchist theoreticians could not foresee. In one union after another, including in the two largest in the land, new leaders are being elected who are responsive to the membership and are increasingly capable of exercising the trade union functions which in Britain's unique conditions have direct expression in the political field.

A tangible demonstration of this process was the Labour Party Conference in 1970 where the major unions supported left-wing policies and supported a left-wing candidate for the post of treasurer of the Labour Party.

This very process is currently rapidly undermining anarchist tendencies, so fast, in fact, that when the first of these two articles on anarchism was begun two years ago the topical importance of anarchism seemed much greater than it does today.

Democracy under Attack

Representative institutions in Britain have been under considerable attack from reaction in the past decade. A certain form of British "Gaullism" has appeared. As capitalism has been shown in its post-war form *still* to go from one crisis to another, impatience with the political gains won by the working class is growing among the monopolists. Reactionary circles in Britain in the 1960's and in 1970 do not call for a Hitler, but for a de Gaulle, to rule for the benefit of Big Business, by-passing Parliament, taking powers away from the local councils and increasingly controlling affairs directly through the carefully selected representatives of the ruling class in the Civil Service chiefs. The Tory Government is doing everything to strengthen the direct power of the big monopolies.

Efficient rationalisers of industry for profit, like Beeching, are advanced as the sort of candidate for governing. Prince Phillip becomes more of a political figure than any monarch (or sub-monarch) has been for a long time. Cabinet government is less and less subject to control by Parliament.

In this situation the advanced sections of the working class call for the defence of democratic institutions and for their extension in new fields.

The anarchists continue to cry for an end to the "chicanery" of Parliament, etc. Now, there is a lot of chicanery about the representative institutions, and that is how the ruling class wants to keep it. But the answer is not a call for abandoning those advances that have been made by the working class. "Don't vote under capitalism" is a slogan which says that the fight for the right to vote was a waste of time and effort, that it would make no difference if workers did not have this right.

By adopting a political line which, to all intents and purposes sees no importance in the fight for democracy still under capitalism, anarchists assist those on the extreme right who also have no time for today's democratic institutions.

Approach to Anarchists

These two articles have been concerned with political ideas and the anarchist approach to Revolution. They have not discussed anarchists as individuals and their place within the revolutionary movement in Britain in full, although I hope it has been shown that their opposition to exploitation and to capitalism clearly places them in this movement, whatever criticism a Marxist might have of them, as of any other section of the Left which is not Communist.

In concluding, I should like to say that the approach Communists might adopt towards anar-

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chists is the same as towards other sections of the militant non-Communist Left, and could well be learnt from Lenin, as exemplified in *What is to be Done?* and in *Left-wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*. For all the problems of working with "Left-wing Communists", Lenin *first* welcomed them, with their hatred of capitalism, seeing this as fertile ground on which much good could be built. This never prevented him making as clearly as he knew how his criticism of the weaknesses in their outlooks.

Both Communists and Anarchists could do well to remember that the leader of Russian Anarchism, Peter Kropotkin welcomed the Russian socialist revolution and, despite his disagreements with a lot that was going on, stayed in Russia until his death in 1921. One of the first of the statues erected in Moscow after the revolution to the world's great revolutionaries was to Michael Bakunin, the founder of Russian Anarchism and Marx's great rival in the battle for the leadership of the working class within the First International.

Some Theoretical Problems of the Construction of an Advanced Socialist Society in Bulgaria

Todor Zhivkov

(The Bulgarian Communist Party held its 10th Congress from April 20th-25th of this year. The opening speech, that is the Report of the Central Committee, was delivered by Todor Zhivkov, First Secretary of the Central Committee and Prime Minister of Bulgaria.

His report was divided into eight sections—Introduction; The International Situation and the Tasks of the Party and State in the Sphere of Foreign Policy; The Struggle of the Party for the Construction of the Material and Technical Basis of Socialism; The Development of Science, Education and the Arts; Further Improvement of Socialist Management and the Extension of Socialist Democracy; Care for Man—Fundamental Concern of the Party; Enhancing the Role of the Party as a Leading and Guiding Force; On the New Programme of the Party.

We print below the greater part of the last section in which Comrade Zhivkov discusses the conception of an "advanced socialist society", and some problems of building such a society in Bulgaria. The sub-titles are ours).

Stages of Communist Society

The new Draft Programme of the Party reflects a large number of new theoretical problems of extremely great importance. I would like to touch upon some of those which are of great theoretical and practical importance.

The most important of these problems refers to *the place and character of the advanced socialist society* as a stage in the development of the first phase of the communist formation.

As is known, Marx and Engels established scientifically the inevitable doom of capitalism and the creation of a new communist social system. Developing the theory of the communist socio-economic formation, they proved that, in its development, this formation would inevitably go through two phases—a lower and a higher. Marx, Engels and Lenin discovered the basic laws governing social development during the period of transition from the capitalist to the communist formation and during the latter's first phase which is socialism.

Summing up the experience of the socialist revolution, Lenin extended and enriched the characterisation of socialism and communism. In a number of his works he was the first to speak of socialism in formation, advanced socialism and fully developed socialism.

Naturally, it was not the task of Marx, Engels and Lenin to make a detailed analysis of the

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communist socio-economic formation and of its phases and stages. That was neither possible nor necessary at the time. But they have left us a great theoretical heritage which we must further develop and enrich in the new conditions.

I must stress the fact that the Soviet Union has accumulated considerable theoretical and practical experience in the course of building communism. Much experience has also been gained by the other fraternal countries and by the international communist and working class movements. All this helps us a great deal in throwing light on our further development.

What is an Advanced Socialist Society?

Now that the construction of an advanced socialist society in the People's Republic of Bulgaria is our immediate, main, historical objective and the task of our everyday practice, we are confronted by the question—what is an advanced socialist society and what are the characteristic features and basic laws of development in force at this stage? What is its place in the development of the first phase of communism and of the communist formation as a whole? *This is the key question of our present-day Marxist-Leninist theory and practice.*

The correct working out of the remaining theoretical problems relating to our social development depends to the highest degree on the correct theoretical elucidation of this key question.

On the other hand, in the final analysis, this question predetermines the concrete strategy and tactics of the Party at the present historical stage. Whether we push forward or slow down the rates of social development will largely depend on how we answer this question. Shall we resort to rash steps and subjectivism in our movement forward or will our policy be scientific and will it correspond to the objective requirements of social development?

It is precisely these considerations that have forced us to analyse and define the characteristic aspects of this stage of advanced socialist society.

We do not claim that our treatment of this question in the Programme is exhaustive. We have not tried to offer a complete and all-out characterisation of this stage. This would have been neither possible nor necessary for such a Programme. On the basis of the achievements of the theory of Marxism-Leninism and on the basis of our practical experience accumulated in building socialism, we have tried to give the main outlines of the advanced socialist society in Bulgaria.

In addition I would like to stress that our Programme has not set itself the task of giving the advanced socialist society a type of characterisation that could be applied by all fraternal parties. We have no such claims, nor have we set ourselves such a task. What we really tried to do was to use not only our own experience but also that of other countries so that the characterisation of the advanced socialist society would be as full as possible and scientifically grounded. However, I would like to emphasise once again that it applies chiefly to the advanced socialist society in the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

The Development of Society

The theoretical basis upon which we place the examination and clarification of advanced socialist society is the Marxist-Leninist teaching on *the emergence, formation and development of the communist socio-economic formation.*

The development of society is a complex and contradictory process in the course of which society passes through different socio-economic formations, while in its turn each formation passes through different phases, different stages and degrees of development.

Let us take capitalism for example. This social formation today does not have the same appearance or the same shape as it did at the beginning of its development. We speak of manufacturing capitalism and of imperialism as the highest and last stage in the development of capitalism. But life has shown that this last stage, so brilliantly analysed by Lenin, also passes through different stages. We are now witnessing the fact that imperialism has reached a new stage, the most characteristic feature of which is state-monopoly capitalism.

It is well known that Lenin also spoke of different stages during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Stages of Socialism

As the *first phase* of communism, socialism also passes from lower to higher forms of social organisation, from lower to higher stages of development. The classics of Marxism-Leninism expressly emphasised the necessity of considering the communist formation and its phases, socialism included, in their *dialectical development* and not as static or frozen.

One should not forget that capitalism began to develop its relations of production deep within feudalism. As is known, socialist relations of production arise and begin to develop only after political power has been won. Moreover, as historical experience has shown, during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism it is not possible completely to build up the material and technological basis which is typical of the socialist system. The socialist relations of production are gradually built up during the period of transition,

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but afterwards they must continue to develop and be perfected. The period of transition is not sufficient fully to complete the socialist cultural revolution and fully to establish socialist ideology in the consciousness of the broad masses of the people. The period of transition is not sufficient to form the new type of man, capable of building the second phase of the communist formation. The period of transition is not sufficient to ensure a harmonious development of the entire social system.

Therefore after the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, society does not have either the objective or the subjective prerequisites for the transition to the higher stage of the communist society. *A more or less continuous period is needed during which socialism develops until it reaches its highest stage which Lenin described as "the advanced socialist society", when socialism reveals and realises all its potentialities for growth in its productive forces, in its relations of production and culture, in the living standards of the masses and the human personality—the stage when it most completely discloses its indisputable superiority over capitalism in the main spheres of the life of society.*

The Stage Reached in Bulgaria

The analysis of social development and of the present-day material and cultural conditions in which our society is developing shows us that Bulgaria has reached the stage of building the advanced socialist society, the stage when we shall complete the construction of the material and technological basis of socialism, when we shall perfect the socialist relations of production, when we shall further develop and extend all elements of the superstructure typical of the mature form of socialism.

Therefore in our country as well the construction of the advanced socialist society is an objective and historically necessary process governed by the objective laws of development, brought about by the degree reached in the development of productive forces and the relations of production as well as by the objective laws governing the transition of socialism to communism.

In working out the question of the advanced socialist society we have come to a new theoretical formulation on which I would like to dwell briefly.

As is known, Marx wrote as follows in *Critique of the Gotha Programme.* In describing the first phase of the communist socio-economic formation, i.e. socialism:

> "What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges,* economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges".

On the other hand, communism, which is the higher phase of the communist formation, arises from and develops on its own basis.

The Draft Bulgarian Programme, however, says that "the advanced form of socialism is built and developed on its own socialist basis" (p.43).

Prerequisites for Advanced Socialist Society

We believe that there is no contradiction here but a further concretising and development of one and the same concept on the basis of rich and new historical experience. Marx speaks of a socialist society *just* arising out of capitalist society. It is perfectly clear that such a society inevitably bears and will bear the distinctive birthmarks of the old society in all respects—economic, moral and mental.

However, can one describe our socialist society which has already undergone a long period of intensive development and which is confidently approaching its maturity as a society which has just arisen out of capitalist society? Can we say that the construction of an advanced socialist society also proceeds on the basis left us by capitalism in political, moral and mental respects, and not on its own basis? I think that the answer in the negative to this question is more than clear today.

What are the main prerequisites created in our country for the construction of an advanced socialist society?

The first fundamental prerequisite is *the absolute domination of socialist relations of production* in town and countryside, as well as the unified socialist economic basis for the development of the whole of society.

The second prerequisite is the degree reached in the development of productive forces. We have succeeded in creating *a comparatively high material and technological basis* as well as a higher level of qualification for the labour force. This has now enabled us to solve qualitatively new tasks in the promotion of industry, the rural economy and in the other sectors of our socialist economy.

The third prerequisite is the new social and class structure which is radically different from that of capitalism as well as the ideological, political and moral unity of our society.

The fourth prerequisite is the *complete domination of the socialist political and ideological superstructure.* The people's democratic state plays an enormous role in the country's socialist construction. Marxist-Leninist ideology is the unshakable foundation of our country's entire cultural life.

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The fifth prerequisite is the strengthened world socialist system, *the new type of mutual relations* among the countries of the socialist community, and the growing *international socialist integration.*

All this constitutes our own new socialist basis created during the formation of the socialist system and upon which the advanced socialist society is to be built and further developed.

Built on a Socialist Basis

We now know from the experiences accumulated during our social development that the phase of socialism will cover an entire historical period which is quite lengthy. Socialist society in Bulgaria and in the other socialist countries, not to mention the Soviet Union, already has a long and extremely rich history. True, it is much shorter than the history of capitalism, but, on the other hand, it is immeasurably richer in creative work in the economic, social, political, moral and cultural fields.

It is precisely on the basis of this perfectly new, rich and all-sided creative work that we are building and shall be building the advanced socialist society. In this sense we say that mature socialism is built and developed on its own socialist basis. Unlike that kind of socialism which appeared and developed directly upon the heritage left us by capitalism with respect to the development of productive forces, living conditions, and cultural conditions, education, etc., *advanced socialism is being built and developed on the basis of firmly established socialist relations of production, on the basis of the material and technological base of socialism now under construction, on the basis of a highly developed political and moral life, on the basis of a socialist state system and democracy, on the basis of an advanced socialist culture, ideology and the education of the overwhelming majority of the population. In a word, we are building the advanced socialist society on a social and economic basis which is radically different from that of capitalism.*

As for the birthmarks of capitalism of which Marx speaks they will be, indeed, historically overcome and outlived, and will finally disappear only when our society enters the highest phase of the communist system.

Social Ownership

Another theoretical problem, which has highly important bearing on the activities of our Party, is the problem of *the character of and trends in the development of socialist ownership* during the period of building an advanced socialist society. As is known, socialist ownership is the economic basis on which the socialist society is established, developed and perfected. That is why the Draft Programme pays special attention to this problem.

What will be the basic tendencies in the development of socialist ownership in this country during the next few years?

It will be first and foremost *the uninterrupted expansion and enrichment of the two forms of socialist ownership—the forms of public (state) and co-operative ownership.* The expansion of socialist ownership does not mean quantitative growth alone. It also means a process of qualitative changes and perfection.

The further development of state ownership can, at the present stage, be ensured above all through *the perfection of the forms of taking care of this ownership.* In this respect of significant importance is the role played by *the concentration of production,* and on this basis—the amalgamation of economic units. There have been set up in the past few years state economic trusts which are powerful economic units. Their collectives are in a position to solve basic problems of their branches.

The co-operative socialist form of ownership is developing chiefly along the line of *the further socialisation of the means of production.* The establishment of large-scale co-operative farms, and particularly of the agrarian and industrial complexes indicate the direction in which this tendency is developing. The socialisation of the means of production in the co-operative sector will continue to expand in the forthcoming years, and this will be an important aspect of the perfection of the co-operative form of ownership.

Hence the conclusion that during the construction of the advanced socialist society the Party must concentrate its efforts on preserving, expanding and perfecting both forms of ownership, and on helping to intensify the public character of socialist ownership taken as a whole.

Every underestimation of the form of co-operative ownership and of its importance for the development of our economy is harmful and contrary to the objective trends and needs of socialist development. The co-operative form of ownership has not exhausted its economic potentiality by far. It has its historical place and role to play in the further construction of socialism in our country.

The fact that, in the process of the general and constant growth of social production, the production concentrated in the hands of the State will grow at a higher rate is quite a different matter. In this way the scope of public ownership, which is the basic form of socialist ownership, will expand; its leading role in the development

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of economy and in the promotion of the socialisation of the means of production in the co-operative sector will grow, and the positive effect of the scope of public ownership on the major processes in the development of society will become greater.

Convergence of Co-operative and State Ownership

Alongside the development and enrichment of socialist ownership, another important tendency which is typical of this stage, will be given wider scope to develop. What we have in mind is *the gradual convergence of the co-operative and state forms of ownership which will result in their fusion in the future into a unified form of public ownership.*

This trend is developing on the basis of the rapid growth of the productive forces of both sectors in our national economy, and on the basis of *the uninterrupted dialectical process of interpenetration and enrichment of the two forms of ownership,* while both the state and co-operative forms of ownership are gaining greater maturity.

This process of interpenetration and enrichment, and of gradual fusion is developing *in several main directions*:

In the direction of standardising the methods of production in both sectors of our economy. Of particular importance in this respect are the industrial methods of production in agriculture. This is now being done in this country on an ever-growing scale.

In the direction of standardising the forms of economic organisation of social production in the state and co-operative sectors, and of setting up joint state and co-operative enterprises—agrarian and industrial complexes, and enterprises in the fields of industry, transportation, building and the public services. At the present stage of development, the agrarian and industrial complexes emerge as the basic form of economic organisation in agriculture, a form which will promote to the highest possible degree the increase of production, the perfection of the co-operative form of ownership, and the gradual fusion of the state and co-operative forms of ownership.

In the direction of standardising the methods of management of the state and co-operative production units, in the direction of levelling the income of the workers in the state and co-operative sectors of production, and others.

In other words, *in the course of building the advanced socialist society the state and co-operative forms of ownership will continue to develop still further; the process of their interpenetration and enrichment will gain momentum, and on this basis, they will gradually converge and will, in the future, fuse into a unified public form of ownership.*

International Socialist Integration

The strengthening of the international social economic integration will greatly affect the nature of the socialist forms of ownership. In this process of integration the co-operation of production between the fraternal countries will expand, the international division of labour will grow, and there will appear an ever-greater number of joint inter-state economic organisations.

In this way *the socialisation of the socialist forms of ownership will be gradually carried out within the entire world socialist system. This will create the basis on which the elements of the international form of socialist ownership will develop as a new phenomenon in the common development of the fraternal countries along the road to socialism and communism.*

Class Relations

The question raised in the Programme of *the development of the social structure* at the present stage of the advanced socialist society in our country is of special theoretical significance. The Programme confirmed the Marxist concept that *the differences between the social classes and groups cannot be completely overcome at the present stage. However, these differences are reduced to such a degree that the socialist society finds itself at the threshold of social homogeneity.*

What reasons are there for drawing such a conclusion?

Radical, revolutionary changes have been carried out in the social and class structure of our society in the years of the people's rule. The classes of exploiters have been eliminated; the opposition between town and countryside, between intellectual and physical labour has also been eliminated. The essential differences between them are being gradually overcome. The nature of our society is determined by the life and interrelations of the workers, the co-operative farmers and the people's intelligentsia who have all been freed from exploitation.

The relationships between the classes and the other social groups are not only friendly, they are also relationships of people participating on an equal footing in the development of our society. They are relationships of the people who are, generally speaking, equally related to the means of production, of people who take active part in the social organisation of labour, and of people who are coming closer together with respect to the size of their income, their way of life, their cultural and social standing.

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All this provides the prerequisite for the furthering of the process of bringing the social groups closer together and of strengthening the characteristic social features which the working people in this country have in common. Relying on the achievements scored so far, the Party is in a position to direct in a consistent and planned way for the forthcoming decades the law-governed process of the gradual formation of social homogeneity in the People's Republic of Bulgaria. The attainment of complete social homogeneity is the task of the second phase of communism.

Leading Role of the Working Class

The Programme defines one of the important aspects of the process of overcoming social and class differences, an aspect which is a matter *of principle* for our Party. What we are referring to here is that *the process of bringing the social groups closer together will be carried out on the basis of the historical mission of the working class, that the growth of the social, ideological, moral and political unity of society depends on the degree to which the interests of the different social groups come close to and fuse with the basic interests of the working class.*

It is this law which explains why the Communist Party, the Party of the working class, does not lose its class character in the process of becoming the Party of the entire nation. It also makes it clear why, in spite of the fact that the rates of its quantitative growth diminish, the working class preserves its leading role as a class in the building of the advanced socialist society. In the light of this theoretical conception it becomes clearer that the revisionist 'theories' are non-scientific and non-Marxist when they assert that, under the conditions of the scientific and technological revolution, the working class ceases to be the leading force on the socialist revolution and in the development of the socialist society.

In the advanced socialist society the social activity of the individual will become greater and so will his awareness that work constitutes the main meaning of life. His aspiration to assimilate the best achievements of science and the arts will become stronger. Men will be the bearers of high moral virtues. There is no doubt that with the gradual convergence of the different social groups and the shaping of their common social and spiritual features, the most important will be the historical virtues of the working class as the most progressive among the classes. There is no doubt that the working class, which is the most progressive among the social groups, will have made the greatest contribution to the process of the gradual convergence of the different social groups and of strengthening their common social and cultural features.

Individuality Under Socialism

The strengthening of the features which the working people of socialism have in common, does not at all mean that individuality will be levelled, that originality will be stifled and that people will be reduced to a common denominator. *Communism means a rejection of bourgeois individualism but not of individuality.* Many-sided individual development is a necessary condition for social progress. *The advanced socialist society offers a wide scope for the expression of creative talent and the possibilities of man, it provides still better conditions for the development of his individual abilities and qualities, and for the development of a rich human nature, which Marx considers to be the basic feature of every higher social system.*

The process of shaping the new individual and of establishing social homogeneity does not take place automatically or as a matter of course. The scientific guidance of this process demands that the social aspects and effects of the scientific and technological revolution be studied and taken into consideration, that a rational territorial deployment of the forces of production be carried out, that the educational system be reorganised, that the working force be qualified and re-qualified in accordance with the new requirements and tasks, that work in the sphere of ideology be intensified, and that every individual cultivate and develop an awareness of the social, political and ideological unity of society.

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We expect thorough investigations from our philosophers, sociologists, economists and other workers in the field of social sciences and their theoretical conclusions about the dynamics of the social and class structure, the processes of intra- and inter-class changes, the strengthening of social unity and the development of the individual.

The State of the Whole Nation

The problems of the development of *the state and socialist democracy* in our country elaborated in the Programme will be of great importance during the forthcoming period. The experience of the Soviet Union, the analysis of the character of the socialist system and its laws, and of the nature of the socialist state and the perspectives of its development confirm the conclusions of the Programme that at this stage *'the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat will grow into the state of the entire nation'*, which, under the leadership of the working class, voices the will and interests of the entire nation, and that at this stage *'the democracy of socialism reaches its highest and fullest form of expression'*.

We accept the principle that both the state and democracy of the socialist society are not unchanging, that they are not established once and for all. Together with the development of the socialist system as a whole, the socialist state and socialist democracy also develop and change, passing through different stages with their specific peculiarities, but retaining their socialist character.

As is known, the socialist state goes through two stages of development, which are determined by changes in the social structure of society. The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which in this country assumed the form of a people's democracy, corresponds to the transition from capitalism to socialism.

The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat undergoes constant improvement and gradually changes into the state of the entire nation in the process of building the advanced socialist society.

In this connection two tendencies become apparent. As a result of increased unity between the classes of the working people the social basis of the state expands in its gradual transition into a state of the entire nation. On the other hand, a process of combining the state and non-state forms of social government develops. This will be a step in the transition toward communist self-government, *which means that the state of the entire nation is a final stage in the development of the socialist state, which introduces the general transition towards communist, social self-government.*

Important changes will take place in the state system and in socialist democracy in the course of this process.

Extension of Socialist Democracy

Democratic centralism will be preserved as the basic principle in the organisation and functioning of the state. But within the state of the entire nation this principle will become richer in content and form. The gradual transition toward the state of the entire nation cannot be made without changes in the functions of the state.

The principle of the unity of power will receive fuller development. To a greater degree the representative organs will both make decisions and implement them.

One of the most characteristic features of the transition of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat into a state of the entire nation will be the growing participation in the government of society by the working people directly or though the representative bodies. More and more often we will resort to the practice of submitting major problems to the entire population for discussion and/or approval through referendums and other similar forms. In this way the working people will participate directly in the government of the state.

On the other hand, representative democracy will continue to develop and improve. The competencies and control functions of the representative bodies over the executive apparatus, in particular, and over the whole state organisation in general, will be further extended. This will inevitably lead to certain changes in the electoral system as well.

The state bodies will not be in a position to express the will and interests of the working people fully and completely, if in their manifold activities they do not activise still more effectively the Bulgarian Agrarian Union and the public political and mass organisations. In the future also these organisations will exert still greater influence on all spheres of state activities, legislative, executive-administrative, juridical and control. The joint activities of the state bodies and public organisations will be continuously enlarged and enriched.

This enhancing of the role of public organisations in the system of public administration will necessarily require a considerable increase in the scope of their legislative initiative and direct participation in taking important state decisions.

Leading Role of the Communist Party

The gradual transition of our state into a state of the entire nation and the extension of the socialist democracy *are unthinkable without the further consolidation of the hegemonic role of the working class, and without enhancing the*

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leading role of the Communist Party in the entire system of social life. The hegemonic role of the working class is the key to the development of the socialist state and of socialist democracy, because, owing to its place in society and its historical mission, the working class is the natural leader of all the working people until complete social homogeneity is achieved, and until the classless society of communism is established. The socialist state is in a position continuously to broaden its social basis and to express more fully the interests of the entire people, only because the social unity of our society is built and grows on the basis of the historic mission of the working class, and under its leadership and the guiding activities of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party, whilst continuing to be the Party of the working class, is gradually becoming the vanguard of the people, the Party of the entire nation and this is one of the most important laws of the construction of an advanced socialist society. It is an expression of the new changes taking place in the economy, the political system, the social and class structure and the intellectual life in this country.

The Party is a living organism which is continuously developing. Eight decades ago our Party was founded as the Party of the working class, as its general staff, its leader and organiser in the struggle for the communist idea. On its long and difficult path the Bulgarian Communist Party has been fulfilling its historic tasks with honour and has now become the universally recognised leader of the working masses in this country. Under the new conditions the Party is continuing to develop and gradually change into a Party of the entire people. This is a reflection of the real changes taking place in the working class, the class of co-operative farmers and the people's intelligentsia, of their growing socialist consciousness and of the strengthening of the socio-political and ideological unity of our society.

Party of the Whole People

The fact that we take into consideration these changes does not mean that we are belittling the leading role of the working class, that we are substituting petty-bourgeois ideas for the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the Party and confusing the ideology of populism or abstract humanism with the communist idea. We firmly denounce the thesis of the dogmatists and the extremists, who believe that the role of the working class can be carried out by the intelligentsia, or the peasants, or the youth, as well as the thesis of the right-wing opportunists about the merging or dissolution of the working class into the other social strata. *In the period of building a mature socialist society the Communist Party continues to be the Party of the working class, but at the same time it gradually turns into the Party of the entire people.*

Obviously one of the main features of this process will be the changes taking place in the social composition of the Party and in the relationship between the working class, the co-operative farmers and the intelligentsia. The main tendency in these changes will more fully reflect the changes within the social structure of our society.

In the future as well the Party will continue to regulate its social composition, but this tendency of bringing the classes closer together and strengthening social and political unity leads *to placing in the foreground more than ever the personal qualities of the candidate, when applying for membership,* without, however, minimising his social background. The shaping of the new type of socialist worker, the conscientious bearer of a Marxist outlook, the fighter for the communist idea, will create conditions for a continuous extension of the social basis of the Party. All strata of the people will ever more actively and conscientiously support the Party policy and render it effective assistance, and the Party policy, in turn, will ever more fully express the interests of the whole nation.

We are fully aware of the fact that the process through which the Party of the working class will gradually change into a Party of the entire people is continuous and complex. It depends on the objective processes of the development of the socialist society and on the purposeful organising, ideological and educational work of the Party among its members and all the working people as well.

The Bulgarian Communist Party is the flesh and blood of the people. In its long history it has never had any interests other than the interests of the working class, the interests of the working people, the interests of socialism and communism. It will continue to hold up, high and pure, the red banner of revolution, guiding the struggle of the people for happiness, for the still greater advance of our homeland and for the complete victory of the communist idea.

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Discussion Contributions on:

Socialism, Democracy and the One-Party System

Alan Bush

Following upon the valuable contribution by Comrade A. J. Papard in the February, 1971, number of *Marxism To-day*, with which I wholeheartedly agree, it appears to me that Comrade Monty Johnstone wrongly imagines that his contributions on the One-Party System are in line with the *British Road to Socialism* in its October, 1968, edition, in which there is a very important foreshadowing of the dictatorship of the working-class as a possible necessity, a form of state which Comrade Johnstone seems to think unnecessary in Britain. In my belief this form of state will be unavoidable for several reasons; one over-riding reason I will give after a short digression.

Opposition Parties

It is true—and this is a debatable point in the British Road—that on page 52 we read the following:

> "Democratically organised political parties, *including those hostile to socialism*, would have the right to maintain their organisation, publications and propaganda, and to contest elections".

This is in contradiction to the most recent manifesto of the French Communist Party, of December, 1968, where the opposite is laid down:

> "In the course of the transition to and building of socialism, the existing democratic parties and organisations, *which declare themselves for socialism and for the respect of the law of the new social regime*, will be able to participate fully in the political life of the country and will enjoy all the rights and liberties guaranteed by the constitution".

Later in the document it is stated that:

> "On the other hand, institutions which are by nature of an anti-democratic character and which exclusively serve the political class domination of the big bourgeoisie . . . will be abolished".

Moreover, this proposal in the *British Road* is in direct opposition to Lenin's teaching and practice on the subject. In December, 1917, Lenin signed a decree to the effect that "members of leading bodies of the Cadet Party, as a party of enemies of the people, are liable to arrest and trial by revolutionary tribunal". It should not be forgotten that in January, 1918, Lenin dissolved the Constituent Assembly, in which the Bolsheviks held only a minority of seats. He wrote in March-April, 1918:

> "Capitalism cannot be defeated and eradicated without the ruthless suppression of the exploiters, who cannot at once be deprived of their wealth, of their superiority of organisation and knowledge, and consequently for a fairly long period will inevitably try to overthrow the hated rule of the poor".

It appears to me that Comrade Gollan may himself have doubts about this formulation in the *British Road;* in his article "50 Years of the Communist Party" (*Marxism To-day*, October, 1970) there is no reference to political parties hostile to socialism, but he writes of the *British Road* as:

> "Our views of a correct strategy for the socialist revolution and building of socialism in Britain, . . . of the tasks of a British socialist government and the forms of what scientific socialists call the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . ."

Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Now to give one of the main reasons why I believe the dictatorship of the proletariat to be an unavoidable necessity at some stage or other of the struggle for socialism: it is clearly and correctly stated in the *British Road* (pages 50-51) that a primary task of the socialist government will be among other things:

> "Socialist nationalisation of all monopolies and other large-scale concerns in productive

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industry and distribution, of the banks and insurance companies, and control of foreign trade and overseas relations".

It is certain that such measures would result in a catastrophic fall in the value of the pound sterling in the international money market. This would not matter very much in food producing countries like Canada, Australia or the Argentine; but in Britain, which is obliged to import vast quantities of food, it would mean an astronomical rise in food prices, unless they could be heavily subsidised out of export profits or by means of increased indirect taxation, a process which would necessarily take time; there might even be food shortages for a time, when food-rationing would have to be introduced.

In such circumstances our petty-bourgeois allies with their constant tendency to vacillation would, in the words of Lenin "throw up their hands, snivel and run about". The dictatorship of the working-class would have to be imposed, otherwise the legislative enactment of socialist measures in parliament (a relatively simple matter when the moment is ripe) could not be followed by the maintenance and building of socialism. Our former allies would desert, and fascism would result. The *British Road* in a sentence of immense significance foresees this eventuality, at least as a possibility, when we read on pages 49-50:

> "The extent to which the popular movement, above all its working-class core, is informed and vigilant, *the extent to which it is geared* to bring its formidable strength into play in support of socialist policies, will be the decisive factor".

No Blueprint

There can be no precise blue-print worked out far in advance for "our own variety of socialist democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat," to which Comrade Klugmann refers in his article on "Socialist Democracy" (*Marxism Today*, May, 1970). A hint of this appears in the *British Road*, page 27: "The experience of struggle will help towards clarity of ideas". But the necessity for the dictatorship of the proletariat in some form or another as a condition of our British state, as of all others, during the legal establishment and consequent maintenance and building of socialism is a fundamental tenet of Marxism-Leninism, to which theory our Communist Party is committed.

Socialist Democracy

Jack Dunman

The field is a vast one, and I would like to consider only some aspects of "Democratic Centralism" which is our own internal democracy, and which has not had much attention in this discussion. I would agree that in working out our democratic arrangements we, and probably most other Communist Parties, have been, and continue to be, far too much influenced by Russian experience both before and after 1917; and to have taken over with insufficient examination, practices appropriate to that experience; but not to our situation in Britain, from, say, 1945 onwards, and at the present time.

What are question-beggingly called "norms" of party procedure were developed in Russia and the USSR over a period when at first even limited legality was rare; then during a period of insurrection, followed by years of intervention by a large part of the world; and after that, even longer years as the one socialist country surrounded by hostile and war-preparing capitalist powers.

We since 1951 have had a programme based on the possibility and desirability of non-insurrectionary transition to socialism, using various democratic rights and machinery which we consider to have been won by past struggle. We have made it clear that this involves, however little some comrades may like it, the continuance of other political parties, anti-socialist parties, while the foundations of socialism are being laid. In foreign policy, we are committed, and not with our tongues in our cheeks, to "peaceful co-existence" between the world systems.

Is it likely that all the forms of organisation developed by the Russians in their totally different situation would be suitable for us in these circumstances? It is not enough to reply that these "norms" were those of the international communist move-

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ment: the ICM itself took them over, holus-bolus, with very little regard to the concrete situations in particular countries.

Inner-Party Democracy

To illustrate my point with a fundamental example: I would agree that a system of electing leading committees that gives very great influence to the retiring committees in suggesting its successors is appropriate, indeed indispensible, in a period of insurrection and civil war, but not so appropriate to a period of peaceful transitions. I shall return to this example.

In passing, I should explain that recognising a difference between a period of "peaceful transition" and "insurrection" implies no judgement as to their duration. In Britain today, for example with the intensification of class-struggle, a Marxist must recognise that we might be in a *totally different* situation in six months time. But we have to work in the situation in which we are, not one we might be in next January. In fact, the present stage has lasted twenty years; and we have lost out badly by not adapting to it.

Turning to "democratic centralism", we should consider whether it means more than a combination of Democracy and Discipline. I am inclined to think that the slightly foreign phrase has facilitated the accretion of some of the habits and practices which have been unnecessary and damaging.

James Klugmann's account of it in the article which initiated this discussion gave the usual criteria; full discussion; thereafter subordination of the minority to the majority; authority for leading committees between congresses. There is nothing particularly Marxist about these principles; they are operated, more or less, by every organisation, political or non-political, which has a serious purpose in the world. The rub is in the "more or less"; and where Marxism comes in is in the recognition that our Party has a very serious purpose indeed, the greatest in the world, the building of a new and Socialist society. Communist Parties are not Football Clubs; and if we were slack about unitedly carrying out agreed decisions and policies, we should never accomplish our aim. The stricter relationship between discipline and democracy arises out of the nature of our task.

Election of Leadership

Neither James Klugmann, nor a Soviet Professor who wrote an authoritative article on Democratic Centralism printed in "Soviet Weekly" a few months ago had a word to say about the methods of electing leading committees, and very little about discussion.

Let us consider in more detail the question of "discussion" in the Party, which is less controversial than elections; but not less important.

In the Report on Inner Party Democracy accepted by the 1957 Congress, it said:

> "Finally, whilst the Executive Committee must take steps to promote the greatest discussion in the Party press, this does not mean that discussion on particular issues once opened should be left to take its own course without guidance. The Executive Committee has not in fact done sufficient in recent months to express its views in the discussion or to guide the discussion. Guiding the discussion does not mean limiting it. The most fruitful results will be obtained by the full participation of the Executive Committee".

I rubbed my eyes when I re-read this. It has been completely ignored in the present discussion, and almost so in the whole of the period since the August 1968 events in Czechoslovakia. The EC produced its well-known four-line resolution boldly asking Congress to endorse the stand it had taken. But lead, or stimulus to discussion, there was very little. Speeches in a Congress do not amount to real participation in a debate.

Look at the discussion to which this piece is a contribution. Not one EC member has participated in it: it has been "left to take its own course without guidance". We do not want to be told what we must think; but we respect the EC, and are interested to know what it thinks we ought to think. Then there can be a real discussion, with give and take, and resulting clarity. Present practice creates an impression that the EC provides facilities for members to let off steam in an ineffectual fashion, but does not really let them assist in the debates which the EC is or ought to be, having.

Reporting the ECs

This leads on to a further point. I can find nowhere in any account of "democratic centralism", the principle of "cabinet responsibility". I will again be very concrete. After every EC meeting there is an "EC Report Back Meeting", at which leading party functionaries not on the EC are briefed on the EC's decisions. The District Secretaries who attend have the vital responsibility of taking those decisions back to the Party members, *winning their convictions for them.* In 30 years I hardly ever heard a report *on the EC's meeting;* still less a report on any debate on controversial questions that may have arisen. I have simply heard the comrade or comrades who gave the one or more main reports to the EC, repeat the reports, as given before they were discussed, in summarised form. Only on rare occasions have I heard references to useful contributions to the discussion, still more

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rarely, if ever, an account of a sharp difference of opinion.

It is believed that the principle applies just as much from political committee to EC as it does from EC to the membership. It is a principle having a certain validity in many circumstances; but it is not an absolute, and when maximum discussion is required, it should be relaxed.

It is easy to understand that it could be damaging for acute differences to be published to the world at a time of crisis; on the eve of an insurrection, to make a famous historical reference. But we are not in such a period now; and if the Party leadership wants to carry out its agreed duty of "promoting discussion", it must discard for a time the fiction that discussion of deep differences does not take place in the EC and PC of the Party; and the doctrine that no one is to know about it if it does.

It is impossible for there to be healthy discussion and controversy in the Party if the EC and the PC remain aloof, above, away, remote from it, and if the individuals who comprise them, if not nameless and faceless, are at any rate opinionless in the eyes of the membership. Don't let us have any nonsense about EC comrades "not feeling free to express themselves if they are to be identified with controversial views". If they feel like that, they are not much use in the EC anyway.

I have left little space to deal with certain more controversal questions which it is essential the Party should begin to discuss. In doing so I do not seek to gloss over or disguise views which many comrades may not like. I have a strong conviction that, in the present situation, comrades who say nothing that will offend a good many others, will not be helping the Party to overcome its problems.

Controversy and Factions

It may be argued that knowledge of controversy in the Party's leading bodies may lead to "factions". This would not be desirable. But can you have real discussions on fundamental matters, without comrades taking sides? This has certainly happened since August 1968, and it has not wrecked the Party. The history of the development of the CPSU(B)—we do not have to regard Stalin's "Short History" as our bible any more—from 1917 until years after the death of Lenin was a history of struggle between comrades with clearly identifiable points of view. The CPSU grew all the stronger because of them, and perhaps their final excommunication was not a vindication of Marxism-Leninism, but one of the early consequences of Stalin's divergence from it.

To be concrete once again: supposing Branches having strong views on questions of importance had the right to communicate these views to other branches; or if this is, on balance, not desirable, that at least the EC had the duty of seeing that they were known. No-one could deny that this would raise the level of interest and controversy within the Party. Why should it be assumed that "dangers" in it would outweigh this very positive gain, when such improved discussion is so earnestly sought for?

I have referred to the question of elections. Here again, we should consider whether the label "Democratic Centralism" has now been used to sanctify practices quite inappropriate in Britain in 1945-70. Our present methods do give some grounds for saying that the retiring EC goes a long way towards nominating the next one; and this impression is reinforced by the zeal with which, at the beginning of every Congress I can remember, the retiring EC fights for the *exact number* it has suggested, before consideration passes to the particular names. It would not be necessary to go all the way to "free election"; and I cannot see why an experiment on the lines of allowing part of the new EC to be elected without recommendation could not be carried out. Everyone can see it gives some advantage to orators and comrades in the public eye, but this could easily be corrected by the remaining recommended section. There are powerful objections to any and every form of election; but a sober and non-conservative mind must admit to some difficulty in defending our present method as the acme of democracy. There is a genuine and powerful need for our methods and forms of organisation, election, and so on, to be a little closer to what the great mass of British people, not wholely misguidedly, regard as their own "norms" of democratic procedure. Democracy must not only be done, it must be seen to be done.

I write very conscious of the fact that this debate takes place at the end (we hope) of a long period of problems and difficulties for the Party. I am quite sure that a major cause of these has been the departures from true socialist democracy in other parties. But it would be arrogant to assume our own blamelessness. A profound, searching, but also an "unconservative" examination of the problems alone will enable us to overcome them. We are not doing so yet. We should not be misled by the revival of Party life and activity due to the intensification of the class struggle, in which we all rejoice, into thinking that we are. Our problems will not be solved by objective historic circumstances, but only by our own efforts; and in the forefront is the need for far-reaching and fearless discussion in the light of undogmatic Marxism.

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